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Memoir of Isaac Forsyth of Elgin

Rare

Alexander Grant

MEMOIR

OF

ISAAC FORSYTH.

Mrs's Compliments

With Wm Macandrew's Compliments

MEMOIR

OF

ISAAC FORSYTH

BOOKSELLER IN ELGIN

1768–1859

BY HIS GRANDSON

MAJOR-GENERAL ISAAC FORSYTH MACANDREW

BENGAL STAFF CORPS

MR. FORSYTH'S HOUSE AND LIBRARY

LONDON

KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, & CO., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1889

PREFACE.

In the year 1862 it was proposed to me to write a Memoir of my grandfather, and I then prepared some materials towards the task. They were, however, but scanty, and it was felt by those who had prompted me to the work that some more must be collected. While this was being done I went to India, and the matter then rested. Some more materials having been obtained by Miss Catherine Forsyth, Mr. Forsyth's only surviving daughter, they were put into the hands of the late Mr. Robert Young, and by him it was suggested that the task should be undertaken by the late Mr. Carruthers of the *Inverness Courier*. What followed this suggestion I do not know, but the work never was undertaken and it remained in abeyance until the year 1888. Then my brother, William Macandrew, thought that, as our grandfather had been so conspicuous a promoter of public improvements in Elgin, it would be well to

revive the idea of his Memoir, and he proposed to me that I should resume the task I had abandoned in 1862; and the materials, such as they were, having with some difficulty been re-collected, I, with sundry misgivings, undertook to complete it.

It was at first contemplated to print it for private circulation alone; but it having been represented that there were still persons alive to whom a Memoir of Isaac Forsyth would be of interest, it was resolved to offer the work for sale; and, in obedience to this suggestion, while asking indulgence for what I feel must be my numerous shortcomings, I submit the Memoir to the judgment of the reader.

I. F. MACANDREW.

July 1889.

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MEMOIR OF ISAAC FORSYTH.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE.

MR. FORSYTH'S BIRTH AND PARENTAGE — HIS FATHER, A FRIEND OF DR. WATTS — HIS MOTHER — HIS BROTHER JOSEPH—HIS MATERNAL GRANDFATHER, MR. HARROLD—SIR ROBERT GORDON OF GORDONSTOWN—MR. HARROLD SETTLES IN PERTHSHIRE—GOES OUT WITH PRINCE CHARLIE —DIES A PRISONER—MR. FORSYTH'S EDUCATION AND BOYHOOD.

ISAAC FORSYTH, the subject of this memoir, was the youngest son of Alexander Forsyth, merchant in Elgin, by his second wife, Anne Harrold, and was born on the 12th September 1768.

The name of Forsyth is of Scandinavian origin and is common in the laigh, or lowlands, of Moray. The late Professor Rhind, in his "Sketches of Moray," tell us that in Pictish times, Moray, with a considerable part of the north of Scotland, was frequently under Norwegian rule; and it is no matter of wonder that

many Danes and Norwegians then settled in a country which is blessed with a milder and drier climate than the neighbouring districts. It is a country distinct from the Celtic Highlands; and the professor publishes a list of names from the rental of the Bishopric of Moray in 1565, in the Baronies of Spynie, Kinedar, Birney, and Rafford, which comprise the whole lowland of the present Morayshire, in which is not to be found the name of a Mac, a Gordon, or a Grant; but Forsyth is there, and indeed the names generally are those now common in the shire lowlands; though in these latter days the highland names are as common as the others in the town of Elgin itself.

In the troublous times of the Stuarts parish registers do not seem to have been kept in the North, and we have been unable to find them, even in Elgin itself, before the reign of William III. The first ancestor, therefore, whom we can absolutely fix, was the grandfather of Mr. Forsyth, William Forsyth, a farmer at Barmuckity near Elgin. He appears to have had two sons. One, James, much the elder of the two, went to Cromarty, settled and married there, and left a son, William Forsyth, who was a man of mark in his day, and whose life was written by Hugh Miller the celebrated

geologist and author. The other, Alexander, was the father of the subject of this memoir.

Mr. Alexander Forsyth was a man of high consideration and respectability in Elgin, where he resided all his long life, and where he had, by his two wives, twenty-one children. It was his custom to go to London every year on business, and, so methodical were his habits, that he made a new will on every occasion before undertaking the journey. He had a great admiration for Dr. Isaac Watts, at that time minister at Stoke Newington, and used to time his journey so that he always sat on a certain Sunday in Dr. Watts' church. At last the doctor, observing a respectable stranger year after year sitting in the same pew, sent word that he would like to see him in the vestry, and the meeting gave rise to a friendship which lasted until death dissolved it. Mr. Forsyth called his youngest son, by his first wife, "Isaac," after the doctor; and, on his accidental death by drowning when a young man, he called his youngest son by his second wife, the subject of this memoir, "Isaac" also, as if determined that Dr. Watts' name should be perpetuated in his family. Mr. Forsyth was married to his first wife, Margaret Ross, in 1730. He had thirteen children by her who

lived to be baptized, and of his fourteen children of this marriage six were twins. By his second wife, Anne Harrold, he had seven children, of whom only two lived to be known. The second son was Joseph Forsyth, the accomplished author of "Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters during an Excursion in Italy in the Years 1802 and 1803," a book which is an authority in taste on the subject of which it treats, while it stands in the very first class as a specimen of condensed elegant English. It is almost bodily copied into "Murray's Handbook of Italy." Joseph Forsyth, on his return from Italy, was arrested at Turin in 1803 by order of Napoleon, at the rupture of the peace of Amiens, as was every Englishman in his power, and kept in rigorous captivity until 1814. He dates his work from his prison at Valenciennes, 1st June 1812. He died at his brother's house in Elgin in September 1815. A memoir of him by Isaac Forsyth, prefixed to the third edition of the "Remarks," is given in Appendix A.

The mother of Isaac Forsyth, Anne Harrold, was no ordinary woman. She was the daughter of William Harrold, a man of integrity, intelligence, and a manly independent spirit, whose memory is held in great esteem by his family and those of his own sept and name. His

family had for generations held lands on the estates of Westerton on the Lochty and Dallas on the Lossie in Morayshire, and he succeeded his father as tenant of the Mill and Mains of Dallas, on both sides of the Lossie, which had long been in the occupancy of his family. He was a man of position and consideration, as shown by his entertaining the Duke of Gordon and his having married a daughter of Mr. Gordon of Cairnfield in Banffshire. The eldest daughter of this marriage was Mr. Forsyth's mother. Mr. Harrold, however, came in evil times. His landlord was the celebrated Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstown and Dallas, a man who seems to have united an intelligence and spirit of inquiry and improvement far in advance of his age to an imperious, harsh, and unsympathising nature. Queer stories are told of Sir Robert Gordon, who was esteemed a wizard in his own country. One legend is, that when a young man in Italy he had joined a society at some entertainment of a magical or necromantic kind, at which, in return for his assistance, it was agreed that the devil was to have one of the company at its close. When Sir Robert, who was the last, was going out the moon was shining brightly, and his shadow was strongly portrayed upon the wall.

The devil appeared and claimed him, but Sir Robert said, pointing to his shadow, "I am not the last," and the devil took the shadow, and Sir Robert had no shadow ever afterwards. The consequence of Sir Robert's views and character was that he pressed on his tenants improvements they could neither understand nor appreciate, and his masterful nature made use of means to attain his ends which rendered the position of his tenantry intolerable. Under these circumstances, though all Mr. Harrold's private feelings and family ties bound him to Dallas, he accepted an offer from the Duke of Perth to settle upon his estate in Perthshire, and, in company with his friend Mr. Cumming of Craigmill, who, like himself, could no longer stand the proceedings of Sir Robert Gordon, he went to Strathearn, and took a mill and farm at Muthill in 1741. Here all went well until the unfortunate rebellion in 1745, which wrought so much ill for Scotland. The Duke of Perth went out for Prince Charlie, and Mr. Harrold and his friend Mr. Cumming, led away by the prevailing feeling of feudal attachment to their landlord who had indeed treated them well, against their own better judgment joined the army of the Prince, and were present at the battle of Preston-pans, in the march to Derby, the retreat to the

North, the battle of Falkirk, and the last fatal field of Culloden. When all was lost, Mr. Harrold proposed to his friend Mr. Cumming that they should try and escape, for they had been comrades throughout the campaign; but Mr. Cumming's son, who in a spirit of boyish adventure had followed his father to the field, was lost, and while the two friends were searching for him they were made prisoners by the Duke of Cumberland's horse, carried to Inverness, and shipped there for London. Mr. Harrold, however, sank under the harsh treatment the prisoners received—treatment which long brought the curses of Scotland on the head of the Duke—and he died while the ship lay off Chanonry Point. He was buried on the beach above high-water mark. Strange to say, Mr. Forsyth's father-in-law, William Forsyth of Cromarty, who was on the other side, had been made prisoner by the Prince's people shortly before, and carried to Inverness, where, however, he had been released; and he saw from one of the hills on the Ross-shire side of the firth the smoke of the battle which put an end for ever to the hopes of the House of Stuart. Mr. Harrold's widow, in common with the rest of the adherents of the Stuarts, was robbed of everything she had by the Duke of Cumber-

land's soldiery, and she and her children were dispersed among their relatives in various parts of the country. The eldest daughter, Anne, became the wife of Mr. Alexander Forsyth in 1759, and Isaac Forsyth, the subject of this memoir, was the youngest son and the sixth child of that marriage.

His mother, Anne Harrold, was thirty-three when she married, for she was born in 1726, and she was a woman of superior understanding, great firmness of character, and exalted piety. Mr. Forsyth had a respect for her character bordering on reverence. She was the recipient of his confidence and the guide to whom he applied in difficulty and trouble, and letters of hers still exist which seem to indicate that the trials and sufferings of her early life had purified and exalted her mind to a degree that is not often to be met with. There can be no doubt that her teaching had much to do with the formation of the character of both her sons, who lived long enough to reflect in their own career their mother's judicious training. She became a widow in 1779, when her son Isaac was eleven years old, so that he could not have enjoyed very much of his father's care, but his mother died in 1807, at the age of eighty-one, when her son Isaac was married and

had children, and Joseph was a prisoner in France.

Of Mr. Forsyth's boyhood hardly any record exists. His life was prolonged so much beyond the usual limit that he may be said to have outlived all his contemporaries; and, when the idea of writing this memoir was broached, there were none left to tell those anecdotes of his early years upon which those who knew and loved him would have rejoiced to dwell. He was educated in Elgin, where his first teacher, a certain Jean Robertson, appears to have been a faithful specimen of the uncompromising, covenanting Christian. After duly instructing her scholars in the Bible and Shorter Catechism, she was in the habit of telling them ghost-stories until their hair stood on end. Few districts are more rich in legends of this description than Morayland. Is it not the land of Macbeth and the witches, the blasted heath, and Cawdor Castle? Is not the Knock of Alves sacred to the midnight orgies of witches with their master the devil? Was not the famous Order Pot, immortalised in the verse of Thomas à Rhymer though now alas filled up, the place where those accused of witchcraft were put to the trial, drowning if they sank and burning if they floated? Was not this district the richest

in Scotland in victims to this frenzy in the days of the earlier Stuarts and the Commonwealth? a certain minister of Auldearn having a nose for witches and their doings almost equal to that of the illustrious Hopkins himself. In all these tales Jean Robertson appears to have been a proficient, and to have had a power of harrowing the feelings of her juvenile auditory until they were afraid to go at night near any of the ghostly localities in which old Episcopal Elgin abounded. Mr. Forsyth also attended the Sang School in the School Wynd, which was under a Mr. John Anderson. The original principal object of this school was the singing in the church; but it taught elementary learning also, and here Mr. Forsyth acquired the three R's and not much more. Indeed, he had not much education, and was mainly a self-taught man, to which his innate love of reading greatly contributed; but he always spoke with the manner and tone of a cultured gentleman, and wrote with clearness, elegance, and force. The truth was the family was in straitened circumstances, and, having to make a sacrifice to send his elder brother Joseph, who had given promise of scholarly eminence, to college, was unable to do full justice to the younger son. Mr. Forsyth did not speak much of his schooldays, and we

know nothing of his friends and companions there, but he kept up a correspondence with one of them, a Mr. Fridge of Baltimore, U.S.A., up to the last.

Isaac Forsyth had of course the usual scrapes of boyhood to go through, and from his ardent temperament he was rather forward in juvenile escapades. One very characteristic anecdote was told in the family. Elgin rejoices in two crosses; the one, the Muckle or Town Cross, which was pulled down by the Town Council in 1785 to save the expense of repairing, and restored in 1888 at the cost and by the public spirit of my brother William Macandrew of Westwood, Little Horkesley, Essex; and the other, the Little or Bishop's Cross, which marked the part of the town formerly in the jurisdiction of the bishop. The Muckle Cross stood then and stands now in the centre of the High Street, the Little Cross stands at the extreme east end of it. There was a rivalry between the Muckle Cross and the Little Cross boys; and, on the king's birthday of a certain year, when Isaac was a boy, each party was to have a bonfire at their own cross. Just then the last hangman of Elgin died, and the Town Council pulled down his house as he was to have no successor, and gave the wood of it for the bonfire in honour of

His Majesty. Naturally, there was a contest between the Muckle and the Little Cross boys for the spoils of the hangman's house, and Isaac was on his knees at the family prayers at the very moment that his victorious companions were bringing the fruits of victory to be thrown amid shouts of triumph into the fire under the windows of his father's house. Their cheers were too much for him. He rose with a shout and rushed out to join the rest at the bonfire, leaving his astonished family and indignant father on their knees at prayer. For several days after this Isaac dare not come into his father's presence, and it was with some difficulty that his mother got him forgiven.

CHAPTER II.

APPRENTICESHIP.

MR. FORSYTH'S APPRENTICESHIP IN ABERDEEN—BEGINS BUSINESS FOR HIMSELF AS BOOKBINDER, STATIONER, AND BOOKSELLER—GIVES UP THE BOOKBINDING—MODERATE SUCCESS—BUSINESS CHARACTER—PUBLISHES SEVERAL WORKS—THE SURVEY OF MORAY AND ITS AUTHORS—THE PROVINCE OF MORAY—GENERAL WADE'S ROADS AND THEIR EFFECT—GREAT AGE OF THE AUTHORS AND PUBLISHER OF THE SURVEY.

In 1783 it was decided that Mr. Forsyth should be brought up as a bookseller and bookbinder, and he was apprenticed to Messrs. John and Alexander Angus, stationers in Aberdeen. He wrought there four years as a bookbinder, and subsequently went to London, where he worked as a journeyman for six or eight months, receiving wages at the rate of 21s. to 24s. a week. While at Aberdeen he made some friendships which lasted through life. One was with Provost Cruden and his family, through whom he became acquainted with Dr. Cruden of Nigg in Ross-shire, who was a dear and honoured friend. His fellow-apprentice was a Mr. Brown, who afterwards became Provost of Aberdeen, and was

a firm friend of Mr. Forsyth's until the Provost's death. Mr. Forsyth has himself left on record his sense of the mistake his friends made in sending him to learn practical bookbinding, instead of placing him in Edinburgh or London where he could have seen bookselling, stationery, and printing trades carried on on a large scale, and acquired an experience which might have stood him in good stead thereafter.

In 1788 Mr. Forsyth began business in Elgin as a stationer and bookbinder. He added bookselling to this, but could not properly attend to it as he soon found, for he had to work himself as a bookbinder, which engrossed his time and attention, while, being a mere mechanical occupation, it was uncongenial to his active mind and social habits. After some years, however, he took his apprentice, John Dunbar, into the binding business as a partner, and this relieved him both from labour and anxiety, as the man turned out well, and he himself was enabled to concentrate his attention on the more lucrative business of bookselling. At that time there was no bookseller between Aberdeen and Inverness, and Mr. Forsyth had a good opportunity as for some years he had the field to himself. He was always of opinion that, had he possessed the requisite knowledge of the trade, he could

have improved his opportunity to much greater advantage, and no doubt he would have done so to a certain extent. But Mr. Forsyth was essentially a many-sided man, and that is not the character which usually amasses money, though it is one which leads to success in public life and in the estimation of others when conjoined with integrity and high principle. Success in business requires a man to give his whole mind to it, at least so far as mundane affairs are concerned. But though it is unquestionable that Mr. Forsyth did not enjoy the advantages necessary for him to take the full benefit of his chance, yet his friends can hardly be blamed on that account.

They were not only deficient in knowledge themselves as to what should be done in such a case, but the poverty both of Mr. Forsyth and his mother opposed a serious obstacle. Besides, we must not forget that the close of the last century was a very different time from the present. Prejudice and very narrow views then hedged such communities as that of Elgin; and though the place had its fair share of enterprise as things then went, and Mr. Forsyth himself proved a notable example of it, it was no easy matter to convince people that anything should be done out of the common groove. Communication with the south was

imperfect and expensive, postage was very high, newspapers confined to the metropolis and one or two of the larger towns; libraries were rare, and in private hands, and learning in the provinces, especially those remote, was pretty much confined to the classics for those who had received an university education and had not to direct their studies to one of the special faculties of Divinity, Medicine, or Law. No son was then deemed wiser than his father; and it is one of Mr. Forsyth's most striking characteristics that, hampered though he was by these considerations, he was far in advance of the society in which he lived in true liberality of opinion, and that amelioration and improvement ever found him in the van.

Mr. Forsyth struggled hard to establish his business, and eventually succeeded to a considerable extent, though, from the causes mentioned, he did not make so much of it as might have been expected from his spirit and enterprise. To the causes attending his partial failure must be added a practice of hospitality which counted nothing his own when there was a friend to share it, and which attended him to his dying day. Having succeeded to some considerable property from various sources at different periods of his life, he engaged in several speculations,

in which his object for the most part was as much to benefit the place and give employment to the people as to benefit himself. In such schemes, as might be expected from what has been told, he was always unsuccessful, and he lost a large portion of his fortune, while what remained was greatly damaged by his connection with the Aberdeen Bank, of which he was the agent in Elgin and in which he had invested a large portion of his means. One of his speculations, in conjunction with others, was to establish a thread manufactory similar to those which had succeeded at this time in Aberdeen and other places in Scotland. Another was the promotion of a concern for making straw hats, the idea of which was borrowed from Orkney where it had been a great success. But whether it was from bad management, or the time was inopportune, or whatever may have been the cause, the fact remained that as speculations they all turned out ill, and his endeavour in the end was rather for how little loss he could compound than for the amount of profit he was to get. In short, with all his public spirit, undoubted energy, and singleness of mind, he was not a good man of business. Writing of it himself he says:—"I may premise, however, that though I readily acknowledge a defect in

the extent and power of my judgment, and perhaps a too great facility in yielding to that of others, and a faulty indifference to the value and preservation of money when acquired, I have on every important occasion, when attempting to improve by investment whatever spare funds were at my command, been most zealously anxious to avail myself of the best information and advice I could procure. But there has been a fatality attending my attempts of this nature which has frustrated all my objects and expectations, whether arising from that carelessness and defect in judgment to which I have alluded, or by the ordination of Providence to humble my mind and call it off from too great anxiety about the things of time, I cannot tell; but I have all along and now do submit to the will of God, in whom alone is my confidence and trust for the future, and who knoweth and ordereth all things aright." Such was the spirit in which he penned the synopsis of a narrative which he intended to leave to his family by way of explaining his affairs, of which he deemed they might reasonably have better expectations.

Mr. Forsyth was not satisfied with the mere retail business of a bookseller, and he published several works having reference to his native land. Among them he brought out, in 1798,

"A Survey of the Province of Moray," a work of considerable local interest, intended to supplement Shaw's "History of Moray." The province of Moray must not be confounded with Morayshire, as it is generally called in Scotland, though officially Elginshire, a county the boundaries of which are perfectly arbitrary, follow none of the features of the country, and were altered within the last ten years for administrative convenience. The Moray spoken of in this work is the ancient province of Moray as it was known before the division of Scotland into modern shires, which, though ancient in England, is quite modern in Scotland, where, until the settlement of the Highlands in the latter half of the last century, the country was divided into districts which did follow its natural features. There were ancient royal officers known as Sheriffs of Inverness, Nairn, and Moray, and their jurisdictions in some way corresponded with the present county boundaries, but they can hardly be said to have been settled, and certainly not for administrative purposes, until the passing of Lord Hardwicke's Act abolishing heritable jurisdictions in 1747.

The original Moray seems to have been the low country along the shores of the firth from the high land east of the Spey to the confluence

of the rivers Farar and Glass. But afterwards the sway, civil of the earls, and ecclesiastical of the bishops of Moray, included the highland districts of Strathspey, Badenoch, Strathdearn, Strathnairn, Stratherrick, and the larger part of Glen Albyn, including Lochs Ness and Oich, and Glengarry, Glenmorriston, and Glenurquhart. This country, comprising the whole basin of the Spey and those of the intermediate rivers up to the Farar, now called the Beauly as far as the entrance to Strathglass, is that of which this work and that of Shaw both treat. Shaw, whose work was published in 1775, gives an account chiefly of the families who have held land within the province, and of its ecclesiastical changes, Pagan, Catholic, and Protestant, in some detail. The Survey, which is supplementary to Shaw's book, is divided into four chapters. The first two, which give additional information concerning the inhabitants and antiquities of the province, were written by the Reverend John Grant, minister of Knockando, and afterwards of Elgin; and the latter two, which give an account of the then state of the province, parish by parish, and of the condition of agriculture and roads, with hints for improvement, were written by the Rev. William Leslie, minister of St. Andrews, Lhanbryd. Both these

gentlemen were intimate friends of Mr. Forsyth. The work is one of the highest interest to those connected with the province, and the fourth chapter, which contains a very clear account of the state of agriculture and of the roads at the close of the last century, is of great interest to the general reader who may be curious to know the state of the country in those respects at that time.

In speaking of the roads, Mr. Leslie remarks: "It is the post-road only that is destitute of bridges on all the larger and unfordable rivers in the province." This, unexplained, sounds very strange indeed; but the reason is not far to seek, for, on looking at the roads which he gives, we find that all those communicating with the south, except the post-road, were made by General Wade with money granted by Parliament for the purpose of opening up the Highlands. These roads were constructed as solidly and securely as the art of road-making then admitted of, and were bridged throughout. On the other hand, the post-road followed the coast-line to serve all the towns which were in that direction, and crossed the rivers where their beds were largest, their volume greatest, and their foundations least stable. Yet it is remarkable that, except on General Wade's roads and the borough bridge of Inverness, there was no

bridge over any considerable river in the province of Moray in 1798. There was an ancient bridge over the Spey at Boat o' Brig, where the Highland Railway now crosses the river between Elgin and Keith. It is the natural road, and there was a monkish hospital there where strangers and travellers were entertained by the community. The hospital was founded before the reign of Alexander II., and the bridge, which was probably of wood, existed before 1228, for it appears, from the chartulary of Moray, in that year this king gave the land of Robynfield for the maintenance of the bridge. This bridge, however, was destroyed about the time of the Reformation, and thence the ferry, called "boat" on the Spey, perpetuated the fact that the bridge had been there in the odd name "Boat o' Brig." Still more curiously, now that a new iron suspension bridge has been built there, it goes by the same queer name. This bridge was sometimes called the Bridge of Spey, and is so marked in some old maps, and it must not be confounded with General Wade's bridge, also called the Bridge of Spey, over the river close to the railway station of Newtonmore, on the great Highland road from the North to the South.

General Wade's roads all lead into or are within the province of Moray. They were the

greatest blessing the Government could have conferred on the country, and had infinitely more to do with its pacification than the forts to which they led. Assuredly they deserved the truly Irish encomium passed upon them by some unknown poet:—

"Had you seen these roads before they were made,
You would have held up your hands and blessed General Wade."

They started from Stirling, and one led to Perth. Soon after leaving Perth this road bifurcated. The eastern branch went by Blairgowrie, Glenshee, Braemar, Congarff in Strathdon, Tomintoul, Grantown, Dulsie, Kilravock to Fort George. The other branch from Perth went by Dunkeld, Killiecrankie, Blair Athol, Drumochter, Bridge of Spey, Aviemore, Bridge of Carr, Bridge of Earn, to Inverness. From this road another branched off, between Drumochter and the Bridge of Spey, which went up the course of that river to the head, crossed the pass of Corryarrick, and down the valley of the Tarff, to Fort Augustus. The other road, from Stirling, passed by Ardoch, Crieff, Kenmore, and the Bridge of Tummel to Dalnacardoch on the Garry, a stage from and above Blair Athol, and there met the Highland road through Drumochter. There was another road, from Inverness to Fort William, made by the General, more than half of which was in

Moray. Except these roads the only other really hill road I observe in the map attached to this work, is one from Aviemore to join the Fort George and Grantown road near the bridge of Dulsie, which thus then became the shortest road from Forres to the South. Mr. Leslie describes this bit as a new and lately formed road in 1798. General Wade's roads have for the most part been relaid since Macadam revolutionised road making, but bits of the originals are to be seen, where the traffic is light and only local, made with any sort of stones that could be picked up, sufficient to give a proper idea of what they were. They were very good work indeed.

Mr. Forsyth also published the well-known views of the Cathedral from Mr. Clark's sepia drawings, the originals of which are in my possession; and he had a share in Professor Rhind's "Moray," with Alexander's characteristic sketches, which are fast becoming all that is left of old Elgin and its belongings. He also projected an "Outline of the Antiquities and History of Elgin." A copy of his programme of this work is given in the Appendix B. It will show the great interest he took in the subject, and the complete manner in which he proposed to illustrate it. On the back of the programme is the following memorandum in

his own handwriting: "1838.—This local history was much talked of for a winter or two, but want of perseverance and zeal in the parties undertaking it prevented completion. 1850.—It has now been completed by Mr. John Lawson, Banker, Elgin, and is deposited in a mahogany box in the Elgin Museum, the key of which is kept by the secretary." The work has not been published, owing to the cost and the slight degree of interest it is likely to excite among the general public. Moreover, Mr. Forsyth had retired from business some time before this work was completed. Had it not been so, there is no saying to what his zeal and public spirit might not have carried him. This work has now been superseded by Mr. Robert Young's "Annals of the Parish and Burgh of Elgin," published in 1870, a work which seems to have exhausted all that can be said about the place up to that time. It is a curious and interesting fact, that the three friends concerned in the composition and publication of the "Survey" illustrate Shaw's testimony to the healthiness of the climate and the long lives of its inhabitants. Mr. Grant died in his eighty-fourth year, Mr. Forsyth in his ninety-first, and Mr. Leslie in his ninety-second. Mr. Forsyth was the younger man, and survived the others many years.

CHAPTER III.

GOES TO LONDON ON BUSINESS.

MR. FORSYTH GOES TO LONDON ON BUSINESS—HIS VOYAGE BACK—LANDS AT HARWICH AND PURSUES HIS JOURNEY BY LAND—JOURNAL OF THE JOURNEY—HIS REMARKABLE POWERS OF OBSERVATION AND EXPRESSION.

In the beginning of 1791 Mr. Forsyth was in London on business, and on the 27th January he sailed for Findhorn in the *Otter*, Captain Joseph Bull. His account of his journey to the North is very interesting, as showing both the means of travelling that existed at the time, and his own interest in, and close observation of everything. They took two days to drop down the river, being obliged to put into the Medway at noon on the second day in consequence of a N.E. wind, where they found themselves alongside of twelve ships of the line of seventy-four and sixty-four guns each. Next morning, the wind being favourable, they went at a good rate through the Sweine, and arrived at Lowestoft roads at six P.M. The wind then shifting against them, they anchored. There they lay from the 29th to the 1st February,

the wind being unfavourable, Mr. Forsyth remarking, "Never passed two more disagreeable days in my life, between anxiety and sickness." On the 1st February, the wind being W. by N., they ran down to Yarmouth, and by 1 P.M., when off Cromer, the wind shifted to N.W. and blew a gale, so they had to put about and reached Yarmouth Roads. That night the wind rose "to almost a hurricane," and continued until morning. On the 2nd February, the wind being very strong from W.N.W., amid lightning, snow, and hail, they got up the anchor when the ebb tide began to make, and bore away for Harwich in company with thirty other vessels, "and in the evening came into Oesby (Bawdsey) Bay, and brought up to anchor along with all the other vessels." In the morning they weighed, and in two hours safely anchored off the town of Harwich. There seems to have been one vessel at least lost and a good many damaged in their company in this storm. The gale, however, continued from the north, and on the 5th, seeing no sign of its abating, and his experiences of the *Otter* having been anything but pleasant, Mr. Forsyth resolved to continue his journey by land. His account of Harwich is:—

"Harwich is a small, confined, fisher town,

nothing worth looking at but a public market, which is small but extremely neat and commodious. From this town Billingsgate is chiefly supplied with cod, ling, mackerel, haddocks, whitings, and excellent oysters. There are about forty sail of fishing-smacks belonging to it, which ply about the Dogger and other banks twenty, thirty, and forty leagues at sea. They are generally four, five, and six weeks out, and, as a rule, turn their trade to great account. Here are several large vessels built —frigates, East Indiamen, and even some seventy-four-gun ships. This little place has been frequently honoured with the royal presence. George II. used to embark and disembark here, and Her Majesty, the present Queen, first touched English ground at Harwich. This is supposed to be the safest harbour round the island. When a vessel is abreast of the town it is completely land-locked, and the loudest wind from any quarter can do no injury. The river Stour is broad, and between thirty and thirty-six feet deep, opposite the town. It is navigable for vessels of seventy or eighty tons for ten miles up." This description, in a very few words, gives a clear and vivid idea of Harwich.

On the morning of the 6th February Mr.

Forsyth was put ashore on the Suffolk side of the estuary, and, hiring a horse at the ferry, rode into Ipswich in an hour and ten minutes —not bad for twelve miles on a post-horse. He remarks on the ride up the Orwell that, "at ebb tide it is not broader than the Lossie, and within two miles of the town becomes narrower, yet with the assistance of the flood is capable of navigating vessels of 300 or 400 tons up to the town. The ride from Shotley to Ipswich must be beautiful in summer: every field is enriched with a close hedge." Of Ipswich he remarks:—"This town appears to me to be pretty large, but extremely irregular, ill-built, and dirty. There seems nothing worthy of remark but an octagon building supporting a dome, on which is placed a very good figure of Justice in the centre of a tolerably large market-place; a gaol and penitentiary-house exactly on the plan of the benevolent Howard; and no less than twelve parish churches." Next morning Mr. Forsyth left by the Cambridge coach at 8 o'clock, by way of Stowmarket, Bury St. Edmunds, and Newmarket, for Cambridge, where he arrived at half-past 6 P.M. As he gives the distance fifty-three miles, the rate of travelling is not what we should call fast. He does not say whether it was a four-horse or a

two-horse coach, but the stages were long, twelve, fourteen, fourteen, and thirteen miles. He does not mention the state of the roads, so we may presume it to have been fair as roads then went. He remarks:—"Stowmarket, twelve miles from Ipswich, is a small neat village. Thence to Ipswich is a small river being made navigable, at a cost of £18,000, to accommodate the neighbourhood with coals, and to enable them to export their corn more easily. At half-past ten left Stowmarket, passed a beautiful field of wheat at least five inches above the ground, and arrived at Bury at half-past twelve. The ride from Ipswich here is the richest that can possibly be conceived. The whole country, in perspective, seems one vast forest. Every field is enclosed with fine hedges and large trees. There are a considerable number of hop grounds, and many very pleasant gentlemen's houses."

It is interesting to observe how the carefully fenced surface of England, even in winter, struck an intelligent man from the north of Scotland in the end of the last century, though it is not surprising when we consider the state of Moray in that respect as described by Mr. Leslie in Chapter V. Mr. Forsyth continues:—"Bury is most happily situated, is particularly dry and

well aired, and seems a very regular, well built, agreeable town. Here is a very fine ancient abbey. One of its gates particularly attracts the attention of all travellers from the beauty of its structure. After leaving Bury two miles we came on a poor and rather barren soil without enclosures or any appearance of richness until we arrived at Newmarket, which is quite a modern and very handsome village, neatly built, consisting of one street of considerable length. At the north end of the town is the celebrated course where so many thousands have been lost and won. It extends four miles along a field of turf as level as a room floor all the way. There are several other courses besides this one. At the end of the course next Newmarket is a square built edifice where the judges of the race sit to determine. On the opposite side of the course is another of the same kind for lady and gentlemen spectators. Nothing further worthy of remark until we came within two miles of Cambridge, where is held what was once the largest fair in England—Stourbridge Fair. It is held on a large common; and there is a neat playhouse, to which the Norwich company come for the three weeks of the fair holden in September. As no playhouse is allowed in the town of Cambridge,

this is extremely well filled by the students and the inhabitants of Cambridge." He goes on to say:—

"Cambridge is rather an irregularly built town of two streets, from which a number of smaller ones branch off. Its principal beauties are its sixteen colleges, public library, and senate house, with the halls, chapels, gardens, and walks belonging to each. The object particularly worthy of the stranger's observation is the Chapel of King's College, which is universally esteemed the most beautiful and most perfect structure of Gothic architecture existing. One feels the strongest sentiment of veneration and awe on first entering this extensive and noble building. It is 260 feet in length, and paved with marble; but what chiefly attracts the notice of connoisseurs is the magnificence of its curious roof, which is all stone, and the keystones of which are each a ton weight. It has twenty-six large windows, which are supposed to be the greatest curiosity in Europe. They are all filled with Scripture paintings in colours inimitably beautiful. Each window is divided in the middle by a stone belt, the upper part always containing some subject taken from the Old Testament, while the lower part contains a subject almost perfectly similar taken

from the New Testament. Thus the raising of the widow's son by the prophet Elijah occupies the upper part of one window, while the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead by our Saviour employs the lower part of the same window. The designs, the execution, and above all the colours of many of the pieces, are truly beyond description. The Senate House, in which is transacted all the business of the university and is held the ceremony of conferring the different degrees, is an extremely beautiful building, paved with black and white marble, and ornamented with statues of George I. and George II. and a most beautiful emblematical figure of glory."

Cambridge had supported the Hanoverian cause while Oxford was Jacobite, and, on one occasion, George II., when he sent a troop of horse to Oxford to overawe the disaffected, had shown his regard for Cambridge by sending it a present of valuable books. On this an Oxford wit wrote as follows :—

> "Our Royal Master, with sagacious eyes,
> Observed what lacked his Universities.
> Horse he to Oxford marched, for he did see
> That learned body wanted loyalty.
> Books he to Cambridge sent, as well discerning
> That that right loyal body wanted learning.

Of the Cambridge Library, Mr. Forsyth re-

marked:—"It is kept in a very elegant edifice adjoining the Senate House. Besides an immense collection of rare and valuable books and manuscripts, there is a book written on the ancient Egyptian papyrus. The subject is on medicine. There is also a beautiful copy of the Koran, on paper made of cotton, and a most curious and elegant Persian manuscript, nobly illuminated and very richly bound, cost in Persia £100; the subject is the 'Wonders of Creation.' There is besides a copy of Cicero's Orations, printed in 1466, one of the earliest books printed, and another of 1470, which shows an amazing improvement for so short a space in the beginning of so important an art." He also enumerates among the curiosities he saw a Chinese pagoda, "made of rice, hard, smooth, and weighty as marble," several mummies, some fine paintings, a number of curiosities sent home by Captain Cook from the South Seas, an original painting of Shakespeare, and a collection of busts in marble of the most eminent ancient and modern authors. "In short," he adds, "it would require a volume to give a tolerable account of the beauties which everywhere present themselves, giving opportunities either of enlarging and improving the understanding, refining the taste, pleasing the imagi-

nation, or gratifying the senses." He concludes by saying, "I left with regret this magnificent repository of learning."

Mr. Forsyth must have employed his time well at Cambridge, for he left it on the day following his arrival. At half-past 1 o'clock he set out by coach, *viâ* Huntingdon, for Stilton. He arrived there at 7 P.M. on the 8th February. He describes the road as "most admirable," met an agreeable companion, and bought a Stilton cheese to take home with him. At 10 o'clock the same night he started in the York High Flyer coach, and arrived at Newark at seven in the morning. Here he left the coach, and he says:—"Newark is a neat little market-town, and has a most beautiful town-hall and assembly-room. A large market is kept here on Wednesdays. The Trent, reckoned the longest running river in England and navigable far above Newark, is of astonishing service to the neighbourhood. From Newark I hired a horse and went across the country to Lincoln; had a most delightful ride through a charming country, and arrived at Lincoln by half-past eleven. Went and examined the cathedral, which is a truly noble edifice, has a chapter-house exactly similar to the one at Elgin, and an astonishingly large bell which they call the

'Great Tom.' It weighs five tons, and admitted me to stand with freedom in the inside. From the top of the towers, which are extremely high, you command a prospect of thirty-six miles in one direction." He mentions seeing a parcel of beautiful manuscripts on vellum, "in most horrid bad condition, lying exposed to damp and the careless tossing of every ignorant visitor." He adds that the income of the cathedral is said to be nearly £50,000 a year, which it certainly is not now. He left Lincoln at half-past one, and arrived at Spittle at three o'clock. He waited there until midnight for the Barton coach to Hull, no doubt enjoying the rest he must have much needed. At one A.M. on the 10th February he started by the coach and got to Hull by ten in the morning. He describes Hull as "the most stirring active place I have seen since leaving London." He left Hull at three o'clock by the mail, and reached York at nine. He does not seem to have seen anything of York except a play which he went to, for he left the city by the mail coach for the North at one A.M. on the 11th February. They breakfasted at Darlington, dined at Newcastle, and reached Berwick at eleven o'clock at night, and Edinburgh at eight o'clock in the morning. Mr. Forsyth,

however, did not halt; but, at half-past ten, set out in the Aberdeen Fly, by Queensferry and Kinross, to Perth, where he arrived that evening. He rested there that night, and the following day being Sunday, he went to see his aunt, Mrs. Jack, who lived at Muthill, near Crieff. Mr. Forsyth thought Perth "the most pleasant town of its size in England or Scotland that I have yet seen. The streets are wide, well paved, and lighted. The buildings are all good, and many of them are truly elegant. The shores or quays are spacious, the walks beautiful, and the Inches extremely fine." On the Sunday morning, having met his cousin, Mr. John Jack, they rode out *viâ* Crieff to Muthill to see Mrs. Jack, the mother of the one and the aunt of the other. She was Jean Harrold, the younger sister of Mr. Forsyth's mother, and had married and settled at Muthill when her mother was driven away. The road he describes as "most execrable." He thought Crieff "an irregular dirty-looking place." Thence they rode over to Muthill, three miles. Here Mr. Forsyth writes: "I had the pleasure of seeing my aunt, Mrs. Jack, and her daughter, whom I had never seen before. I took a walk up a long hill, and saw the Mill of Struthel, which my grandfather and mother were once renters of, but which is

now converted into a lint mill. The water of Mahony, which I have so often heard my mother speak of, was there too, and they were all dear to me. Coming back we had a beautiful prospect of Strathearn, which is excessively rich in cornfields and wood, and is beautifully watered by the poetical and meandering Earn. Here an amazing variety of gentlemen's seats everywhere present themselves, the most conspicuous of which is Drummond Castle, the residence of the Duke of Perth's family. It is boldly and finely situated on the top of an eminence at the head of the strath, as if intended to command and protect the others. Its present possessor Captain Drummond and his lady are almost unexampled for their generosity, benevolence, and public spirit." At six in the evening he left his aunt's, and rode back to Perth along the most villainous road past the "Birks of Invermay," of which he could not have seen much as it was manifestly dark. He reached Perth at half-past nine. At 4 A.M. next day, the 14th February, he started by the Aberdeen Fly. He remarks that the road to Cupar-Angus was execrable, for they had four horses yet were three hours and a half doing thirteen miles. He proceeded, by Glamis and Forfar, to Brechin, where they dined, and thence, by

Lawrencekirk and Stonehaven, to Aberdeen, which they reached at eleven at night. The roads and coach appointments must have then been better in the South, for on the 11th, Mr. Forsyth, from York, had done 150 miles in twenty-four hours; and here, on the 14th, he had taken nineteen hours to do 84. Of Lawrencekirk he remarks: "This is the neatest village, perhaps, in Scotland, supported by the benevolent and liberal Lord Gordonstone. He has built a good inn and an excellent library, well stocked with books, some fossils, corals, stuffed birds, paintings, and statues, and particularly with the famous album. The genteeler part of the neighbourhood have the use of the books freely." He spent the 15th with his friends at Aberdeen, and on the 16th rode to Keith; and, in his own words, "on the 17th, at 11 A.M., after enduring a good deal of fatigue both in body and mind, and at a considerable expense, I arrived in the good town of Elgin."

Our limits would not admit of more copious extracts from the diary, but enough will appear to show how active was his mind, and how much he was able to pick up and record in the midst of a rapid, continuous, and fatiguing journey at the worst season of the year.

CHAPTER IV.

A TOUR IN THE HIGHLANDS.

TOUR IN THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND—HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY AND OBJECTS OF INTEREST HE SEES—LABORIOUS METHOD OF SMELTING IRON IN THOSE DAYS—UNEXPECTED MEETING WITH NEIL GOW—MR. FORSYTH'S APPRECIATION OF CIVILISATION MORE KEEN THAN OF UNADORNED NATURE.

In August 1799 Mr. Forsyth started on a pleasure tour through the Highlands of Scotland, accompanied by Mr. Alexander Allen, writer (as solicitors were then called), who was his predecessor for a short time as secretary of the Morayshire Farmer Club; and, as this tour shows Mr. Forsyth's warm appreciation of the beauties of his native country, I shall give an account of it with extracts from his journal. They seem to have performed this journey on horseback, and their first day's journey was to Inverness. They rode post, I presume, though it is not so expressly stated. On the 2nd August, they rode to Auldearn, half way, and thence to Inverness. Next morning, the 3rd, they rode by General Wade's road along Loch Ness to the

Fall of Foyers. It rained heavily in the morning, and, in consequence, they saw the fall to great advantage. Mr. Forsyth says: "The road from Inverness to the fall is one of the most beautiful in Scotland; and, from the wet morning, we derived the advantage of seeing and feeling the fragrance of the surrounding scenery in its utmost perfection. We found the fall from the preceding wetness in extreme grandeur." After returning to the inn, called the General's Hut, to refresh themselves, they rode on to Fort Augustus, "through a country the most desolate and dreary that can well be imagined." This is the upper part of Strath-errick, as the road leaves the lake near Foyers and follows the course of that river and then the valley of one of its tributaries to its source, whence it descends upon Fort Augustus. Next day, the 4th, they rode along the banks of Loch Oich and Loch Lochy to Letterfinlay Inn, half way down Loch Lochy, where they refreshed themselves, and I presume changed horses, and went on in the afternoon to Fort William. The journal mentions passing "a flat marsh of a mile in length, the water of which flows half into Loch Oich and the other half into Loch Lochy." This marsh marks the boundary of the province of Moray. The basin

there entered is Lochaber. The journal says, "We reached that beautiful loch which nearly resembles the Ness in the beauty and magnificence of its surrounding scenery, but much inferior in the quantity and ample expanse of its water. There is a continual succession of high, conical, and separated hills on either side, whose very passes seem to rest on the water, and down whose steep sides a thousand waterfalls of every description pour their tribute to the Lochy. After a ride of three miles from Letterfinlay we parted with much reluctance from the side of this enchanting loch, which in many points appeared to us as interesting as Loch Ness." Modern lovers of nature would perhaps consider the comparative place here given to Loch Lochy as too high. It seems to me nothing like so grand as Loch Ness, and not so picturesque as Loch Oich, and it certainly is not wooded like either of them. The hills are as described by Mr. Forsyth, but they are green, not brown like the northern ones, and there is an uniformity about their conical appearance and separateness which, to my mind, makes the hills of the lower part of the Caledonian Canal route less picturesque. They change again at Ben Nevis. The journal describes the road as excellent but hilly, and through a good pastoral

country for cattle and sheep. It crosses the Gloy by what is called Low Bridge, and the Spean by what is called High Bridge. Of this it says:—"It consists of three arches, founded on rocks, far above the river Spean, and when viewed from the bottom has a very striking and impressive effect. We soon after approached the base of the highest mountain in Scotland, some say in Britain, Ben Nevis. It consists of a vast ridge of mountains separated from each other by horrid chasms, and even at this time of the year covered in many places deep with snow. The highest peak is rarely ever seen free from clouds, and, as Nevis chose to keep his cap on while we passed him, we were not gratified with an accurate view of his extreme point. The height has been ascertained to be 4370 feet." It is 4406 by the Ordnance Survey. "Nearly opposite the centre of this huge mass is the ancient ruin of Inverlochy Castle. It is an oblong square with a round tower at each corner. The walls are still very strong, and have been cemented by fire. It is said to have been the residence of the early kings of Scotland, and that a treaty between Charlemagne and Achaius, king of Scotland, was there signed." Achaius was at most king of Scots. Kenneth the Second was the first king of Scotland, A.D. 834,

having conquered the Picts, of whom we hear no more. Before his time the Scots held only the West Highlands of Scotland, which they, having emigrated from Ireland, had gradually acquired. It is remarkable, however, that the title was King of Scots until the union of the crowns under James I.–VI. Mr. Forsyth continues: "Leaving the royal ruin we crossed the river Nevis by a fine bridge which brought us into the fine village of Maryborough. We found a number of very smart, well-dressed people parading about on the side of this placid beautiful loch in their Sunday suits. Fort William, at the end of the village and detached from it, is larger than Fort Augustus, and protected by an equal number of men and guns, but, perhaps from the absence of the Lieut.-Governor, is in a wretched state of repair and abominably dirty. The command is vested in a Captain of Invalids. We found an excellent inn and good beds at Maryborough. On Monday morning, the 5th, we proceeded along Locheil to Balnahulish, fourteen miles of as pleasant and varied scenery of mountain and loch as the mind can conceive. After a comfortable breakfast we set out to see Glencoe, celebrated as the scene on which the most barbarous murder that disgraces the annals of our

history, which was transacted under the authority of King William, in the month of February 1716" (*sic*), "by Captain Campbell of Glenlyon and 100 soldiers; in which the then peaceable, and to their assassins the most hospitable Macdonald of Glencoe, with 200 of his clan, were to have been most inhumanly butchered. The chief, with his children and forty of his brave dependents, met an unmerited and most horrible fate from those hell-born villains, whom for two months they had entertained with a prodigality of kindness. The other 160 fled through passes in the mountains unknown and inaccessible to their bloody pursuers, and their wives and children, unhoused and unclothed, were left without protection to the merciless fury of the soldiery and the terrible inclemency of the weather. To this celebrated scene we went, ten miles off the line of our road, and found ourselves most amply repaid by the gloomy grandeur and awful magnificence it exhibits. But to trace its peculiar beauties, or describe their effect, is beyond, far beyond, my feeble powers." Mr. Forsyth has made a mistake in the date of this famous massacre, which took place in February 1692. In 1716 George I. was on the throne. Macaulay places the chief responsibility on the younger Dalrymple

of Stair, but the voice of the people charged it on Glenlyon, and it is said that some seer cursed the family that it should never have a direct heir for two hundred years. The time is now nearly up, but I believe it is a fact that during all the intervening period the estate has never passed from a father to a son. The journal continues: "The present Macdonald of Glencoe has a very neat house at the side of Loch Leven near the entrance of the glen. About two miles from Balnahulish is the slate quarry, the property of Captain Stewart of Balnahulish, at present rented for £350 a year by Mr. Rae of Penrith, in Cumberland, who employs some 50 to 70 hands, some of whom have 10s. a week." This, from the way he puts it, would appear to be in Mr. Forsyth's opinion good wages in 1799. "The slates are shipped free on board for 25s. per thousand." Thence they proceeded through Appin to Portnacroish, where they passed the night in very bad quarters. On the 6th they started as early as possible, and after three miles crossed Loch Creran at the Shian Ferry and entered Lorn. The journal says: "Three miles beyond Shian we found the ruins of Brigonium, said to have been once the chief city of Scotland, and, with more probability, to have been a Danish forti-

fication. They are situated on a rock of tolerable height and considerable extent, forming a kind of promontory in the bay of Lochnell. There are no traces of walls visible to distinguish with any accuracy the original form of its construction. On digging up the earth great quantities of stone calcined by fire have been found, of so light a nature as to float on the surface of the water."

From Brigonium they proceeded to Connel Ferry at the mouth of Loch Etive, or very near the mouth, and crossing there went by Teanuilt to Bunawe, where the river Awe discharges the superfluous waters of the lake of the same name into Loch Etive. Mr. Forsyth describes the commotion made by the ebb-tide coming out of Loch Etive at Connel Ferry, but it is nowadays too well-known for repetition. He says the country about Teanuilt is a finely-wooded and grazing country. He writes: "At Bunawe we found an iron foundry, long established (since 1753) by an English company from Lancashire. They bring down the iron ore in vessels, and carry back the pig iron to Workington. The great object of its establishment in this sequestered spot was the vicinity of immense woods rented by the company at the merest trifle. These afford the

expensive article of charcoal; besides which they manufacture from the birches a great quantity of hoops for casks, and rear annually forty Highland galloways which are shipped off for sale, while they maintain also, for their own work, three hundred of these useful creatures."

This little extract shows several things. In the first place, the amount of information Mr. Forsyth managed to pick up while rapidly riding through the country. He rode this day twenty-nine miles, passing two ferries, as well as the river Awe. Secondly, it throws some light upon the iron manufacture of that age, or rather the generation before Mr. Forsyth. Iron was first smelted with pit coal by Roebuck in 1740, and he established the famous Carron works in 1759; yet a company was formed in 1753 to bring iron from England to Scotland to the forests on the sea coast, to be there smelted and carried back again in its transformed shape. It further explains the rapid denudation of Scotland of forest trees, and the ignorance of the landed proprietors concerning the prospective value of their estates, and the want of the communication of ideas in that age. Most probably the Bunawe Company had never heard of Mr. Roebuck's discovery, or assuredly they could hardly

have undertaken such an enterprise. Yet it seems to have been working in Mr. Forsyth's time, and, as the iron trade was in its infancy, and iron made with charcoal is undoubtedly better and commanded a higher price, the company, no doubt, went on as long as the woods lasted. But the clean sweep made in the latter end of the eighteenth century of the natural forests of Scotland is a downright calamity to the country in many ways.

From Bunawe they went on to Dalmally that same day, the 6th. Mr. Forsyth says: "From Teanuilt we went on to Dalmally, thirteen miles, ten of which run along the margin of Loch Awe, and seven of them had the most delightful shelter from a burning sun, of the finest natural wood we ever saw. In some places we rode nearly on a level with the lake, at others were carried to a dizzy height above it, while the enormous mountain of Cruachan Ben—inferior only to Ben Nevis—towered above the clouds on our right (left?). The loch, while it continues to run in an easterly direction for eight miles, is only half a mile broad, but when it suddenly turns off to the south, and continues in that direction for sixteen miles, it extends its breadth to about two miles, and then contains many small but beautiful islands, covered

with woods, cottages, ruins, and every ornamental object." From Dalmally, on the 7th, they rode to Cairndow by Inverary, the road at first being hilly and dreary until within three miles of Inverary, where they found a beautiful waterfall on the river Ary, and "thence rode through the finest plantations of forest trees imaginable." Mr. Forsyth gives a vivid description of the town and castle of Inverary, which are too well known to be quoted. Before they left they "climbed a steep hill behind the castle, on which stands an old tower. The ascent, in the middle of a hot day, was the most fatiguing and oppressive we had ever encountered, but the view from its top was glorious. Such an expanse of sea, dale, hill, and mountain bursting at once on the eye astonished and delighted us. The noble and extensive woods and lawns in the fullest verdure, the castle, the neat town of Inverary, the gentlemen's houses on either side of Loch Fyne, at this time nearly covered with boats and vessels, presented such a grand assemblage of interesting objects as we had never before seen collected in one spot." As they left Inverary after dinner they saw the herring-fleet going out for the night's catch. He writes: "We had the good fortune to enjoy, not only the peculiar beauty of the

weather, but the sight of 500 herring-boats, which take up their anchors about sunset and proceed from Inverary to the head of the loch to drop their nets and wait until daylight for the chance of fish. The noise and stir produced by the tongues and oars of 2000 men—there are four to each boat; the gentle motion of their boats on the glass-like expanse of the loch; the surrounding mountains and woods, and the softened effect produced by the evening sun was interesting beyond anything we could imagine." "In the morning the take was pretty considerable, from 4 to 20 and 25 hundred per boat, which, taken at an average of 1000, makes a total capture of 500,000 fish." Next day, the 8th, they rode over "Rest and be Thankful," and by Glen Croe to Arroquhar on Loch Long, the views of which place were pronounced very fine. Two miles more brought them to Loch Lomond, which they greatly admired, and they saw Ben Lomond, passing by some very fine plantations of oak to Luss Inn, whence they rode through a beautiful country to Dumbarton. Next morning they crossed the Clyde at Erskine Ferry, and rode to Paisley *viâ* Greenock. This was the ninth. It is unnecessary to quote Mr. Forsyth's remarks on places so well known, and which, at this time, were

thriving greatly. On the tenth they rode from Paisley to Glasgow, in which city they spent five clear days, seeing all the sights and the manufactures for which it was even then famous. On the afternoon of the 16th they left Glasgow and rode to Hamilton. There they saw the view from the Castle of Chatelherault, which is pronounced to be "among the finest they saw." Thence they rode on to Lanark, through what Mr. Forsyth calls "fifteen miles of the richest scenery in Scotland." That same evening they visited Stonebyres—the lower fall on the Clyde. Next morning (the 17th) they went to see four cotton-mills, belonging to a Mr. Dale there, employing 15,000 or 16,000 persons.* He says they are the most extensive and best conducted in Britain. From the mills Mr. Forsyth went alone to see the other two falls on the Clyde, Cora Linn and Bonnington Linn. He does not say why his companion did not go; whether he was more interested in the factory, or, perhaps, did not care about the fatigue, for they started to ride to Edinburgh at ten o'clock, and found the road to the Halfway House dreary and desolate, which, of course, was not improved by the ride being in heavy rain. There they found a coach for Edinburgh,

* (*Sic*) but probably 1500 or 1600.

and, availing themselves of it, reached the city at six o'clock. They went to hear the famous Incledon sing that evening. They stayed in Edinburgh until the 20th, when they left for Linlithgow, with which Mr. Forsyth was much pleased. Next morning, the 21st, they rode from Linlithgow to Falkirk, through a very fine farming district abounding with gentlemen's seats. They were disappointed in an attempt to see the Carron works, to which strangers were not then admitted, and went on to Stirling, visiting by the way the Field of Bannockburn. Arrived there they went up to see the Castle, and this is Mr. Forsyth's description of the view from it: "Here a view burst on our sight, extensive, rich, and beautiful beyond description. The distance occupied by the lofty mountains of Ben Lomond, Ben Ledi, and Cruachan Ben on the west; on the north the finely-pastoral Ochill Hills; on the south a very lofty range of wooded hills; and eastward the Forth winding its way, with seeming reluctance to part from the charming valley it ornaments and enriches. The valley, or carse, extends from Ben Lomond to Grangemouth, and is nearly thirty miles long and from six to seven in extreme breadth. About three miles off is Blair Drummond, the pro-

perty of the late Lord Kames, who commenced on it an experiment on the improvement of moss ground, which his son, Mr. Home, the present proprietor, has continued and much extended. This is done by floating off the moss surface by means of a large water-wheel of a very simple construction, then draining and ploughing. The crops are very great." After seeing all the lions and curiosities of Stirling they rode to Dunblane, where, after examining the cathedral, they slept. Next day, the 22nd, they rode to Muthill to breakfast with Mr. Forsyth's aunt, Mrs. Jack, passing by the way the Roman Camp at Ardoch, and thence by Comrie and the north side of Loch Earn to Lochearnhead, and through Glen Ogle to Killin at the head of Loch Tay. He speaks in very high terms of Strathearn, and thus of the shooting-lodge of Mr. Dundas, then the minister and almost autocrat of Scotland. "It looks like a fairy habitation placed in the midst of the wildest and most romantic rocks, hills, and mountains covered with fine wood. The house is small but most admirably constructed for convenience and comfort. We found Mr. Dundas a mighty favourite with his poor neighbours. We stopped to dine at Woodend on eggs and bread and butter, and then rode along

Loch Earn, six miles of very fine characteristic scenery, having Ben Vorlich, a very high mountain, on the opposite side. Here we caught a tremendous shower of rain, but bore it patiently as it gave us the opportunity of seeing the mountain scenery to the best advantage. The rain, which broke upon us rather in spouts than showers, soon filled every little chasm in the mountains, and a thousand cascades and falls of every description were seen pouring down the sides into the torrent at the bottom." They were well lodged at Killin that night. Next day, the 23rd, they rode by the south side of Loch Tay to Kenmore, seeing by the way the Hermitage and fall of Acharn, where the same startling effect of drawing away a door and suddenly exhibiting the fall was arranged then as now. After breakfast at Kenmore, for which they were quite ready, they rode down the Tay to Inver, one mile from Dunkeld, where the inn seems to have been in those days. This beautiful country is too well known to bear extract of the journal. On leaving Dalguire "from thence to Inver we passed almost the whole way under the finest arches of oak, elm, ash, and beech that we had ever seen. During the last three miles night closed in upon us and the sky had some very dark clouds hanging over it. These added a

tenfold gloom to the awful darkness of the long extended arches, and produced the most impressive effect on our minds. Turning a corner we issued out of those deep recesses and suddenly found ourselves in the inn-yard at Inver, where the house was all in a bustle and a party of ladies and gentlemen dancing to Neil Gow's animating music. The transition was so unexpected and so different, that for a moment we felt as if changing one state of existence for another. The ball having broken up, we got Neil and his bass to entertain us at supper with his admirable performance, and then went to bed highly gratified with the day." On the 24th they went to see the fall on the Bran in the grounds of Dunkeld Palace, and Ossian's hall and mirrored room beyond constructed to startle the spectator and enhance the effect of the fall. Thence to Dunkeld itself along a walk leading from the ferry to the greenhouse, of which Mr. Forsyth says: "It is beautiful, it is noble beyond any other we had seen. Here the river is broad, deep, and gentle, its banks quite full, and the luxuriant foliage on either side bending into it. This walk extends to a considerable length, and is ornamented with an elegant alcove seat and a cool sequestered grotto, in the rude unpolished masonry of which are placed a

number of fine quotations enjoining the love of solitude and the practice of all the virtues." It must be remembered it was the age of Zimmermann and the "Man of Feeling."

Having seen all the glories and beauties of Dunkeld, with which they were greatly pleased, they started after breakfast for Blair in Athol, or Blair Athol, as it is now called. Of this twenty miles, "the whole," he says, "is beautiful, and the first six or eight miles from Dunkeld particularly so," but though he must have ridden through the famous pass of Killiecrankie he does not allude to it in his journal. They visited the falls near Blair Athol both on the Bruar and in Glen Tilt. One, which he calls the York Cascade, he describes as very fine. At 7 P.M. they left Blair Athol on a ten-mile ride to Dalnacardoch Inn, which he describes as dreary, probably from fatigue, for they had thirty-one miles of road that day, besides all their sight-seeing excursions. Next morning, they rode through the pass of Drumochter and down Glen Truim to the Bridge of Spey and Aviemore, passing quite across the district of Badenoch, a ride of thirty-nine miles. Of this day Mr. Forsyth says little. Next day, the 26th, they rode from Aviemore by Grantown down the Spey to Knockando, Tumdow, as Mr. Forsyth calls it,

and thence over the Mannock Hill through Birnie to Elgin, a distance of forty-two miles, and "arrived safe at home after an absence of twenty-five days, during which we had ridden 566 miles over a tract of country perfectly new and in general most interesting to us both. Though often weary, sometimes wet, put out of tune by the incidents natural to travelling, and at a considerable expense of money and time, yet are we highly gratified and richly repaid by the variety of information, the accession of new ideas, and the personal enjoyment which the tour has produced, and we offer our grateful acknowledgments to Providence, who has permitted us to accomplish it without danger or misfortune."

Considering this journal critically, I must admit that Mr. Forsyth had a more keen appreciation of the results of civilisation than of the unadorned beauties of nature. He enlarges on rich fields, gentlemen's seats, lawns, plantations, reclaimed land, and manufactories, quarries, and enterprise generally, rather than on the wonderful picture of Loch Lomond, the savage grandeur of Glencoe, the picturesque wildness of Killiecrankie, or the splendid panorama of mountain and strath before his eyes in the upper course of the Spey, from Grantown to the

Pass of Drumochter. It is true he speaks of the "gloomy grandeur and awful magnificence" of Glencoe; but he declares that to describe it is beyond his powers, while he dwells on the historical story of the massacre, and the evidences of modern civilisation at its mouth. Perhaps it needed Scott to educate the mind to the true appreciation of the wilder scenery of nature. Dr. Johnson did not understand it, and no poet of the eighteenth century, that I remember, makes it the subject of his verse. In fact the sense of it that Mr. Forsyth does show appears to be quite in advance of his time.

CHAPTER V.

AGRICULTURE IN MORAY.

MR. FORSYTH A FARMER—STATE OF AGRICULTURE IN SCOTLAND AFTER THE UNION AND AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE PRESENT CENTURY—SUPERIORITY OF ENGLAND AT THIS TIME—SCOTTISH IMPROVEMENT—HIGHLAND AND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY—MORAYSHIRE FARMER'S CLUB—MR. FORSYTH ITS SECRETARY—HIS ACTIVITY AND SERVICES—RETIRES THROUGH DEAFNESS—DEPUTED TO INQUIRE INTO NORFOLK FARMING—HOLKHAM AND MR. COKE—MR. FORSYTH'S REPORT TO THE CLUB—GREAT CHANGE IN THE CHARACTER OF SCOTTISH AGRICULTURE—THE LAND OF MORAY.

In Mr. Forsyth's day it was the custom of men of his class in Elgin, and, I believe, in other Scottish country towns, to supplement their town work with a little farming, and he followed the fashion in this respect. He took the farm of Haughland, about a mile from Elgin on the lowland bordering on the Lossie, as its name implies, on the road to Pluscarden and Dallas. It was good land, but the farm was on too small a scale for it to be very profitable, and it was greatly damaged by the celebrated flood in August 1829, which covered a large portion of it with river sand. Before he took this farm

Mr. Forsyth had become a married man with a family of children and subsequently of grandchildren, who had no greater delight than to run about the farm, get a ride in a cart or on the back of a horse, or try to catch trout in the Lossie, or better, in the Black Burn, which were both close by. Here Mr. Forsyth relaxed from the cares of the town surrounded by his wife and children, and busied himself in putting into practice those ideas of agricultural improvement which were revolutionising the culture of the country, and were of intense interest to his ever active mind.

When he was born, agriculture is described by Mr. Leslie in the "Survey" "to have been in a very backward state." Shaw says that it is probable that agriculture was introduced into the province at the same time as Christianity, but it does not seem to have made much advance until the reign of the bishops and monks commenced. Some of them knew Latin enough to be able to read Virgil's "Georgics" if they had the chance, and their pilgrimages and journeys to Rome and other places on the Continent made them acquainted with the somewhat better system which prevailed there. But their advance was not very great. The Church lands were no doubt the

best cultivated, but that was more owing to the greater humanity or more enlightened self-interest of the clerical owners, and more particularly to the greater security of these lands, and the better protection afforded to the tenantry in an age when the Church was both feared and respected, while they were the best lands on the country side. Mr. Leslie says: "In the interior of the country, by the word corn oats only are understood, from which it may be inferred that this species of grain was at the first only cultivated. Barley was also at an early period introduced; but, comparatively, it is only of late years that wheat, rye, pease, and beans were cultivated, and it is still within the remembrance of the passing generation that the culture of potato, turnip, and clover began to be practised." He further adds: "Poultry, with the improvement of capons, geese, and a few ducks, comprised the whole variety of fowl; the swine was reckoned still unclean; and beef, like venison, was eatable only at one season of the year. The clergy and great men had a few of the less delicate kinds of fruit, but gardens of every kind were wholly among the common people unknown; they only cultivated barley and oats; bread and water was their chief subsistence, and meal and milk their highest

luxury. Agriculture had made no farther advance at the era of the Reformation, when the wheat in the Bishop of Moray's rental was only ten bolls and the barley equal to 1232. In the convulsions which then ensued all improvement was suspended. High and low entered so deeply into the reformation of Church and State that they had neither leisure nor inclination to improve the soil; and, except some beneficial laws, everything respecting tillage tended with accelerated progress to decay. During a struggle, persisted in by four successive monarchs with their people, for prelacy instead of presbytery, agriculture fell so low by the end of the last century"—this was at the revolution—"as to be wholly unable to withstand the seven unfavourable seasons which then took place. In the higher parts of the country the practice of agriculture was in that short period wholly abandoned: thousands of people, leaving their homes, perished in the highways and streets merely through insupportable hunger. The magistracy of Elgin established a police for burying, on every dismal morning, the bodies of those miserable wretches who had fallen a prey to the famine under the piazzas in the course of each melancholy night."

As regards cattle, Mr. Leslie remarks:

"When the breed of black cattle began to be attended to in this country a coarse Dutch breed was first introduced: they were more weighty than the native breed, but less handsome, and more difficult to maintain and feed. They gradually disappeared, and the Lancashire breed became for some time the greatest favourite. They have also been for some time given up, being accounted less handsome and more delicate than the true Scots breed, which is now only raised. Very handsome bulls of this kind have been introduced from the isle of Skye and the western Highlands. In the low part of the country there are but few sheep, they being abandoned to the poor people who reside in the skirts or among the hills: they are of the small white-faced breed. The wool is fine, but the animal is so scantily fed and so poorly treated that neither the wool nor the mutton is of much importance. In the higher parts sheep are of more consideration: the breed is generally black-faced, and the treatment of this stock is the same as on the sheep-farms in the south-west of Scotland."

Mr. Leslie further tells us that, "except about the seats of the proprietors, the whole country was unenclosed." There were no fences, and "the cattle are as particularly tended in

winter as in summer, and the wages of the boys employed in this service are equal to that of the female servants." He adds, that "earthen dykes were tried by some tenants but found to be wholly inefficient against black cattle and sheep," so they were abandoned. At the time that the "Survey" was written the planting of the country had begun, it having been previously denuded of its primeval forests through reckless felling without any provision for re-growth, for a forest requires nothing but judicious felling and the removal of the logs to re-cuperate itself, so long as people are not allowed to fire it for the sake of the young grass which springs up after the fire. Nay, so bountiful is nature, that fire even may be employed with advantage in the conservation of forests by those who understand how to use it. But under the combined influence of reckless felling as regarded the old trees, and the quantity of roe deer and goats (with which animal Shaw describes the Highlands as well stocked) operating on the young ones, the country became bare. Mr. Leslie says that notwithstanding the beginning made in planting forest trees, "the country still appears naked, and the fields quite unsheltered."

Such being the state of agriculture in Scotland for a long stretch of time, Mr. Leslie goes

on to say that improvement commenced about the middle of the last century. He admits that they were indebted to England "for the general knowledge, and for many particular improvements in agriculture." Among these probably were the introduction of the potato, the turnip, and seed grass, especially clover. The potato, both he and Shaw say, was introduced in 1740. The turnip was probably cultivated somewhat later, for it was introduced into England by Lord Townshend, who was driven from office by the jealousy of Walpole in 1733, and he did not then join the "Patriots," but retired to his estate and devoted himself to agricultural improvement. Probably clover came about the same time.

The turnip has been a great success in Scotland, and has made it possible to keep cattle in good condition through the winter, and made beef a perennial article of food. Mr. Leslie, however, claims for Scotland that "repayments (of improvements) of late have begun to be made." He enumerates among them an improved harrow, a plough constructed on scientific principles, and the threshing-machine driven by water when available, or, if not, by horse-power. The knowledge of these was no doubt owing to the great improvement in agriculture which

Scotland gave to itself, to England, and to the world, in the foundation of the Highland and Agricultural Society in 1783. It is impossible to say what advantage this society has not conferred upon agriculture. It is the parent of all the agricultural societies in the world, and has been the means of turning an art into a science, and of practically showing the landlords and tenants what other minds can do and are doing towards the development of the first and greatest civiliser of mankind. Its first child was the Morayshire Farmer's Club, founded in 1799, of which Mr. Forsyth was one of the original members, and certainly the most active one during his long connection with it. He became its secretary in 1800, and held that office for twenty-seven years, only retiring because his infirmity of deafness rendered it impossible for him adequately to discharge the duties of the office. During the time he was secretary he carried on an extensive correspondence with all parts of the country on the business of the Club; and, his energy was so conspicuous and its success so manifest, that, at the end of seven years of official life, the Club presented him with a handsome piece of plate. The Duke of Gordon became the patron of the Club and the gentlemen of the county joined it, and ere long other

clubs of a similar character were founded in other counties.

In 1818 Mr. Forsyth was deputed by the Club to visit Norfolk, then at the head of agriculture in England, to examine and report upon the way it was there carried on. He went there in May of that year, and at once proceeded to Holkham, the seat of the celebrated Mr. Coke, whom he found absent at his duty in Parliament. He was received, however, with the greatest kindness by Mr. Blaikie, who appears to have been Mr. Coke's manager or agent, and by him was introduced to a number of the best Norfolk farmers, from whom he met with a most cordial reception and full and complete answers to all the questions with which he had been furnished by a Committee of the Club in Elgin. His general observations are as follows :—"Norfolk owes its superiority over every other district in agriculture to the perfection of its drill husbandry and the facility which this affords towards thoroughly and radically cleaning the land by horse and hand-hoes. Hence the farms approach nearer to gardens, in point of cleanness and produce, than in any other county in England of the same quality of soil. In 10,000 acres, all done on the flat by drill machines, not one furrow is

to be seen and not one irregular drill. In the clay district, which is about a fourth of the whole, the drills are made on ridges of ten or ten and a half feet wide.

"Another primary cause of the superiority of Norfolk is in the nature of its subsoil. This consists of chalk, clay, or marl, all in various degrees calcareous, and is found twelve to eighteen inches below the surface. From this inexhaustible source, everywhere deposited, the surface is cheaply and easily renovated every twenty-one years.

"Next, the system of sheep eating turnips *on the land* is of the utmost importance towards its enrichment and the high culture it receives.

"The vicinity of the London market, which readily swallows up all their produce of every kind, is a source of great advantage and encouragement to increase their stock and crops.

"The enclosure of the land is general and very complete.

"The accession of foreign manure, in the use of crushed oil-cake, has enabled a largely increased breadth of turnips to be cultivated, which again has increased their flocks and cattle, and in every way enriched them and their farms.

"The introduction of improved breeds of

cattle and sheep has materially contributed to the general good." Elsewhere Mr. Forsyth tells us that these improved breeds were Devon and Galloway cattle and Southdown sheep. These latter were crossed with Leicesters. Of the cattle, the Devon are what they select for breeding purposes, the Galloways are fed and sent on to market. He continues:—

"The horses are a strong, bony, active race, well adapted to work the light lands of this county with that activity to which they are urged by the habits of the people.

"The variety and excellence of the agricultural implements are also of considerable consequence in the general scale of improvement; and the noble example and encouragement which Mr. Coke has for forty years afforded, by his practice and princely liberality, has effectually aided the general disposition to improvement in this county."

It would be quite out of place here to go into the details of Mr. Forsyth's report, and, unfortunately, I am unable to give the opinion of the Club upon it, as their papers have been lost from 1806 to 1822. But the report is a very clear one and altogether to the point, and must have been of great value at the time. I subjoin what he says of one farm, "Egmere,"

as a specimen of a first-class Norfolk farm in 1818.

"Has 1188 acres—rent £2021—all arable or rich old pasture, completely enclosed in square fields of about 40 acres—an excellent friable loam adapted to the four courses in which he works it. It is a parish in itself, has very few poor, and is tithe free. Has a new and most commodious dwelling-house, offices, and homestead, erected by Mr. Coke, with two detached barns, sheds, fold-yards, and labourers' cottages, the whole of which cost about £10,000. His stock are Devons and descendants of Galloway Scots. They are in very fine condition. One pair of four-year-old heifers were shown of 60 stone (14 lbs.) each. Oxen about 70 stone. Of these he had during the winter about 150. He had 1200 very fine Southdown sheep, and 40 work-horses, besides a number of colts, &c., coming on. He is a great breeder of pigs, and often has in the course of a year 400 of the Suffolk kind. This is altogether a magnificent farm."

Mr. Forsyth visited all the improvements "on Mr. Coke's domain at Holkham (3500 acres) in Mr. Coke's own possession," and was greatly delighted. By the introduction of the word "domain" it is not clear nor even probable that the 3500 acres was all arable or pasture land,

and there is nothing to throw further light upon it. As the result of his observation, besides the adoption of the Norfolk system so far as it was locally suitable, Mr. Forsyth recommended the introduction into Moray of an inverted horse hoe for grain, movable 3 to 9 inches. Another for green crops, movable 18 to 30 inches. A "cultivator" for bringing up "quickens" (quitch grass?) to the surface, which was a much better implement than the "extirpator" in use in Moray—and a marker on the drill to make a line on the ground for the horse to follow on the next occasion, with flexible tubes for sowing in drills as better than the stiff ones in use at home.

The following excerpt, showing how plantations may form an intermediate product of the soil between barrenness and cultivation, is from the pen of Mr. Forsyth in the *Farmer's Magazine*, and is dated 12th January 1812:—

"Near Bishopmill, on the property of the Earl of Findlater, in the year 1772, there was planted an enclosure of 120 Scots' acres. The moor was very bleak, yielding no pasture, and only a carpet of dry, short heath. The whole space did not produce one penny of rent. For several years back the weedings have returned considerable sums, and last year it was deemed

advisable to grub out by the roots a few acres, by way of experiment, for the purpose of cultivating the soil. The wood brought £20 an acre, and the ground it covered let for 20 shillings an acre. The sole expense to the proprietor was for grubbing-out the wood, which cost £3, 5s. per acre. As the weedings produce much more than the original cost of enclosing and planting, it is obvious that the proprietor now draws a clear rent of 40 shillings per acre for what, in its previous state, never produced a penny, while the country was embellished by the appearance of the wood, and the farmers, much accommodated with paling, found the weedings a cheap substitute for a variety of other useful purposes."

The soil of the Laigh of Moray is a light arenaceous loam. It is a thirsty soil, and Mr. Forsyth used to say of it "that it could take rain every day and a spate on Sundays." This soil is called "Moray Coast," and consists of two or three feet of the above over a stratum of sandstone, or hard, compact gravel. It is a warm composition and requires rain, and Shaw quotes a couplet:—

> "A misty May and a dropping June
> Brings the bonny land of Moray aboon."

Moreover, this land has more sun and less rain

than any other part of Scotland. Hence it is a very early country for so northern a latitude, and it is said that barley is always cut by the 12th of August at Forres, which is generally first. This part of the country, which at the beginning of the century was as Mr. Leslie has described it, during Mr. Forsyth's life, and greatly during his incumbency as secretary of the Morayshire Farmer's Club, became one of the most highly-cultivated districts in the island. He himself, in his farm at Haughland, took his share in practical improvements, and succeeded in raising both wheat and other grain of superior quality which commanded a higher price for seed. Indeed, the farm was more for this purpose, and as an agreeable change for his family from the town, than with any idea of making money out of it. On the occasion of Mr. Forsyth's retirement from the secretaryship of the Club, which took place in 1827 for the reason already stated, the Club presented him with a second handsome piece of plate in recognition of his long and devoted service to the interests of the Club and of agriculture. It was a well-deserved testimonial, for the Club had its crisis at one time, and it was mainly by the exertions of its indefatigable secretary that this period was tided over until its benefits had become more palpable

and the necessary support became constant. On the occasion of the jubilee of the Club, on the 2nd February 1849, Mr. Forsyth was present at its dinner, and, in reply to the toast of his health, he referred in terms of honest pride to the fact that it was the only institution of its kind, except its honoured parent, which could point to an unbroken existence for anything like that time, having never been suspended for one working day in all that long period, while he alone of all the original members was left to be present at that festival and tell that tale.

Any one who looks at the Laigh of Moray now, will see the difference in the appearance of the country since it was described by Mr. Leslie, as already quoted. The whole country is carefully fenced, the farm-steading, the town as it is locally called, is substantially built of stone and slated. The farmers' houses are, in all cases comfortable, and in many cases elegant buildings, with ample gardens attached often stocked with fine fruit trees. The larger farms have steam-engines of their own to drive their varied machinery, while the smaller are served by portable engines which travel from farm to farm. The fields are covered with crops, which individually may be surpassed here and there in soils more suited to that particular crop

which is the object of comparison, but, as a whole, second to none. Black cattle and the small breed of whitefaced sheep have been banished from the laigh, and splendid heavy beasts, crosses between the English short-horn and the polled Angus breed, have taken their place, while the sheep are the Cheviot and the Leicester or crosses between them. Active, powerful horses of the Clydesdale breed, which can take a single cart loaded a full four miles an hour, are seen on every farm. The best and newest agricultural implements, exhibited at every Club show, are in use all over the country. The farmers are men of a high class in their profession, for agriculture has now become a special profession, in which an amateur can hardly hope to succeed.

The face of the country no longer presents the bare appearance described by Mr. Leslie, for the proprietors are fully alive to the lesson recorded in the quotation already given from Mr. Forsyth's article in the *Farmer's Magazine*, and now, seeing the advantage of planting on the inferior soils, they have gone in for it largely, with the happiest effect both on their own interest and the beauty of the country. There are few parts of the island of Great Britain more diversified than the land of Moray, none

showing the blending of Lowland with Highland scenery to greater advantage. It produces almost all that man wants, except metals. It is a land of corn, and, if not of wine and oil, it produces first-class whisky and beer, while oil is represented by the finest milk and butter. Its rivers abound in salmon; its burns and lochs in trout. Its hills and woods and lowlands are as well-stocked with game as any in the country. Its cattle and its sheep are of the highest class, and the firth which washes its shores is famous for the quality and the quantity of its fish. It has a more genial climate in the laigh than the surrounding country or indeed any part of Scotland, and it has men in it who can make the most and the best of it. It is, in the language of the local poet, "A land to live and dee in."

CHAPTER VI.

VISIT TO PARIS.

MR. FORSYTH'S INFIRMITY OF DEAFNESS—GOES TO PARIS TO CONSULT AN EMINENT AURIST—NOTES OF HIS JOURNEY—FRENCH SOLDIERS—FRENCH AGRICULTURE—ABSENCE OF GENTLEMEN'S CHATEAUS AND OF CARRIAGES—PARIS—VISIT TO A SYNAGOGUE—FRENCH SUNDAYS—FÊTE DIEU—ENVIRONS OF PARIS—RETURN HOME—FAILURE TO OBTAIN RELIEF TO HIS INFIRMITY—ANECDOTES CONNECTED WITH IT—SINGULARLY SLIGHT EFFECT ON HIS ACTIVITY OF MIND.

ABOUT the year 1825 Mr. Forsyth began to feel that deafness growing on him to which we have alluded as the cause of his resigning the secretaryship of the Morayshire Farmer's Club in 1827. As the infirmity increased he was recommended to go to Paris to consult an aurist there of European reputation. He has left an account of his journey which is very interesting and instructive. His companions on that occasion were Mr. Hardie, the city chamberlain of Aberdeen, who was similarly afflicted and was also seeking advice and relief if possible, and Mr. George Smith, the founder of the well-known firm of Smith, Elder, & Co., the pub-

lishers of London, a firm friend whose early career Mr. Forsyth had helped on. They set out in a steamship, the first Mr. Forsyth had ever been on, and he remarks on the wonder of going from London to Gravesend in three hours against wind and tide. The passage from London to Calais, ninety-three miles in twelve hours and a half, appears to him quite marvellous, and we need scarcely wonder at this, when we recollect his previous experiences of the sea as detailed in the abortive voyage of the *Otter* in Chapter III. Arrived at Calais the appearance of the French soldiery on the pier struck him as unmilitary. "Their appointments, dress, movements, and manner have nothing of the precision, activity, and cleanliness of the British soldier." He then goes on to describe his first French dinner at the hotel. "A very small tureen of really excellent soup, a carp in rich sauce with a few bad potatoes, three or four small mutton chops, a *fricassee* of chicken very tasty, and a made dish in which bad mutton, eggs, and garlic predominated, with some good asparagus, cheese with bread and butter, and a dessert of indifferent apples with a few almonds and raisins and some sweet-cakes. To moisten all this, we had a glass decanter of excellent water and a bottle of the

best *vin ordinaire* to mix with it, which the waiter called Bordeaux of the first quality. To finish the business in a superior style, we had a bottle of the best rose champagne, and found it, even though we went no deeper, very exhilarating. It ought to be so, when I tell you that even here it is charged seven francs a bottle."

In a subsequent walk through the town, of which he gives a description, he says: "I was much struck with the kind and respectful manner in which the inhabitants greeted one another, as also with the total absence of anything like curiosity, staring, or anxiety about our appearance; very different from the conduct of the natives in a small town in England, or even in our own dear Scotland. But I was extremely surprised and indeed disappointed in what appears to me a great change in the manners of this people in another respect. I looked for an excess of spirit, gaiety, and grimace in all classes, but have not found it in any. They seem fully as staid and stupid as our ain folk. Among the men there is a gravity of deportment and an independence of air that I was by no means prepared for, but among the women there is rather more liveliness in addressing one another, and I observed some with considerable power of expression and gesture."

During the journey to Paris Mr. Forsyth makes some remarks on French agriculture, of which he was no mean judge. "The road," he says, "is bare and flat though occasionally undulated with low hills, and is on the whole interesting. We occasionally passed small fields of good wheat and rye and a few of barley, but no oats nor any appearance of green food for the winter keep of cattle, such as turnips, potatoes, or cabbage. The clover was a rich crop, but their husbandry appeared to be poor. The fields were very small, there were two or three crops in a few acres, a great want of manure, very inferior ploughing, and no enclosures. The implements are miserable, a plough with two wheels and not a bit of iron in it except the coulter and that exceedingly small, the harrows very light and the teeth all of wood. The horses, as all we have seen in France, are small, punchy, active cattle, very strongly made, what I have sometimes heard called a great horse in little room. Of black cattle we saw only a few miserable-looking cows, and one small flock of sheep. What struck me as extremely defective was that we did not see one chateau or family-seat in this long distance, and nothing, except within the walled towns, so good as a two-hundred acre

farmhouse in Ross-shire or Moray. Another thing was a total want of private carriages. In this 110 miles we did not meet one, and only three or four hired gigs or cabriolets and three diligences going down in their ordinary course to Calais. The want of intercourse in the country, and indeed of carts either of commerce or husbandry shows its poverty, but it seems to possess an excellent soil and a fine climate, and, under good management, ought to make both proprietors and people wealthy and happy."

At Amiens our traveller was in raptures with the cathedral, of which he declares the sight "to be well worthy of any trouble or privation. The columns which support the roof and cloisters are forty-four in number, and so lofty and slender, yet so beautifully proportioned and ornamental, that they delight every eye. The nave is its chief glory, but the three circular windows and the sculpture on its front, which is larger than life and most delicately cut, also form a most striking attraction. Approaching Paris, as might be expected, the fields, houses, and husbandry improved, but until we reached St. Denis we saw nothing like private carriages or any indication of that sympathy and connection which exists in our blessed country between the land and its owners." On arriving at Paris Mr.

Forsyth saw all the sights of that wonderful capital, and he remarks with contempt on the jealousy and revenge of the Bourbons in effacing the names of Napoleon and his generals from the column in the Place Vendôme, and the throwing down of his statue from the top. Next day being Sunday, he went to hear high mass in Notre Dame, and his remarks on the service have been elsewhere quoted (Chapter X.) After the service the party examined the church, the vastness and many of the details of which they greatly admired, but on the whole pronounced it decidedly inferior to Amiens.

Mr. Forsyth, of course, visited the aurist, and put himself under his charge. He said he required fourteen to twenty days for his treatment to have a fair chance, and so Mr. Forsyth had to reconcile himself to that. In the meantime he visited all the sights of Paris. He was somewhat shocked at the French way of spending the Sunday, and he remarks: "After the service of the day is over, about noon, all hands seem agreed that the remainder of it should be devoted to dissipation and gaiety. Hence, as we came to Paris not to reform the people, but to observe their manners, and form opinions on their institutions and habits, so far as we had the means of observing these, we followed the current, and

our *valet de place* took us to the Champ de Mars, where thousands of people were assembled to witness the ascent of Mademoiselle Garnerin in a balloon, to which she was attached by a car and parachute. A few minutes after four the balloon rose slowly and majestically into the air, and in ten or fifteen minutes attained an elevation of several miles. The sky was without a cloud and the sun shining brightly, so that every movement was seen. She threw out ballast three or four times, and then cut away the parachute. I was electrified when I saw her descent from the balloon, which seemed a mile, in a moment. At last the parachute expanded, and then appeared stationary, but gradually became more visible, as it approached the earth by no means rapidly. She came down quite safely in a garden without the barriers on the north side of the city." So it appears that Professor Baldwin's performance is no such a novelty after all.

It is, of course, impossible to quote his observations on the ordinary sights of Paris, but I may give one or two which show not only how they struck him, but have perhaps some interest in themselves. Here is what he says of a visit to a synagogue. "We walked into a synagogue of the Jews. We were readily admitted and

placed in the best seats. There might be 100 to 150 men on the floor, and a few women in a gallery above behind a lattice screen. In the middle stands the Reader of the Law, and the elders on an elevated platform, with a desk and cushion to place the law upon. At the upper end, and within a small enclosure, stood the High Priest, a very aged man with a long white beard. Of all the places of worship I have yet entered, that of the Jews is certainly the most irreverent, and that which seems least of any interest to the minds or feelings of the worshippers. While the Reader was chanting or reading from the written roll, the men were constantly crossing over from one side to the other, and seemingly entering on common conversation or business affairs. However, in an instant they all applied themselves to their printed books or psalters on a particular prayer or psalm being begun by the Reader, and when that ended they all again relapsed into an earnest or a laughing colloquy. They seemed only in one instance all to join with any degree of attention to what appeared to me to be their devotion. A psalm was *routed* or *ranted*" (*sic*) " by the Reader and a number of young men and boys, in which the bulk of the congregation joined with some solemnity. After this, the High Priest, conducted from his station

by two of the elders, came to the desk and read a prayer, in which all the people joined, and in which only they requested us to stand up. In all the preceding and subsequent parts we continued to sit with our hats on, as they all did. At the conclusion the portion of the law which had been on the desk was carefully rolled up by one of the elders and shown in his hands to all the congregation. It was then covered with a case of tarnished gold cloth, and a large silver plate with some figures and an inscription was hung on the upper end of the roll thus covered, and, after more prayers and psalms, a kind of solemn procession was made from the desk to a repository where it was laid up within folding doors, a psalm, in which the whole congregation joined, being sung while the procession with many halts and genuflexions advanced."

Another description is that of the "Fête Dieu," which he saw to great advantage, royalty assisting. He says: "Went to the Louvre to see pass one of the most splendid processions of the year. It commenced in an old church at the east end of the Louvre, through the Place de Carrousel, into the Palace of the Tuileries, through the long galleries there, returning to the church along the quay, a distance of one and

a half miles. A double file of soldiers left a space twelve or fifteen feet perfectly clear for the procession. The ground or street was newly gravelled and strewed with herbs and leaves. Immediately without the soldiers were two rows of women, and beyond them three or four of men and women mixed; and this for the whole extent on both sides, so that there could not be less than 60 or 80 thousand present. Two-thirds of the way was decorated on both sides with large pieces of tapestry suspended from a railing of wood at least fourteen feet high, exhibiting Scripture pieces and historical and classical subjects. These were old, and had seen much service in the same sort of way, and could bear no kind of comparison with the new and modern manufacture we saw at the Gobelins, which was beyond anything the most vivid and interesting of all the sights we have seen. At about 11 o'clock, after the service (High Mass) was finished in the church, from the bustle among the officers and military we were apprised that the procession was in motion, and by and by a sergeant of the Royal Horse Guards, with three privates following, reached our length, which might be a third of the whole distance, at the end nearest the church. Immediately after appeared five young women with

veils dressed in white, the centre one carrying on a pole the flag of the Virgin Mary, the other four having each a long white ribbon attached to the lower end of the flag, which was also surmounted by a beautiful plume of white feathers. After these came two priests in their robes with breviaries. Next about two hundred girls in two lines all dressed in white, with veils hanging from their heads backwards, and most of them had chaplets of flowers on their heads and prayer-books in their hands. These were followed by two hundred boys dressed in their best, bareheaded, and having a white silk favour on their right arms. All these children appeared to belong to the parish. After them came a lot of priests, and next fifty-six servants in the royal livery, all in pairs, with silver-laced hats and coats and white feathers, each bearing a long wax candle lighted in his hand. Then another lot of priests. Then a large military band playing, followed by about twenty young ladies dressed uniformly in white muslin with veils. Next came a great many of the superior priests, chiefly oldish men, in their robes, singing and chanting the service. Then followed a large square canopy of crimson velvet highly embroidered with gold, carried by four priests, standing from the ground about twelve feet.

Under it walked the Bishop, and on a kind of small stool or table before him, attached by an iron framing to the posts of the canopy, stood '*The Host.*' Ever and anon he raised this sacred emblem *of the presence of the Divinity* to the people, and showed it to both sides of the line, when smack down went all on their knees, except myself and some other sturdy Protestants who did not give way to such idolatrous mummery. The troops, as by one word of command, all went to their right knee with their muskets lowered to the ground. Even Royalty itself went to its marrow bones in the dirt and sand. Following the canopy was the Dauphin of France, and near him two general officers. Next came the King (Charles X.), surrounded by five or six general officers and Ministers of State, all bareheaded; then some more courtiers in full dress. Then came the Dauphiness of France, daughter of Louis XVI. and a good-looking woman, her train borne up, attended by two general officers. Then the Duchess of Berri, mother of the Duke of Bordeaux who is heir-apparent to the crown of France. She is a poor, emaciated, bilious-looking thing. She was attended by two generals, and had her train borne. Next followed three ladies-in-waiting in court dresses, and the whole affair

was closed by more officers and priests, and a party of soldiers to protect the rear.

"Opposite where I stood, the worthy Bishop took it into his head to elevate the Host, when down went King, Dauphin, generals, and nobles all, as well as the Dauphiness and Duchess, notwithstanding their rich dresses, and this they must have done twenty times during the procession. A circumstance occurred while they were gathering themselves up after this particular prostration which amused them and was particularly beneficial to me. Our *valet de place* was standing by me, and I asked him who that lady in pink was and who was the lady in sky-blue? Forgetting the presence the fellow roared out, as he thinks it necessary to do usually to me, 'That is the *Dolphiness* of France and this is the Duchess of Berri.' In the twinkling of an eye I had a full front from the two Royal personages, who saw at once that I was deaf and a foreigner, and smiled. As my countenance is now pretty well hardened by intercourse with mankind I enjoyed the rencontre exceedingly, and thereby obtained, what, but for this fellow's rudeness, I should not have done, a full view of these courtly dames. This is a very faint description of the Fête Dieu—the Fête of God ! !"

After expressing an opinion that a church which tries so to cajole the people cannot last long before the "march of mind," Mr. Forsyth remarks:—"Along this whole line, so far as I could observe, not one eye or face indicated the smallest portion of reverence or sympathy with the declared object in view. All seemed to consider it a piece of holiday fun, and an occasion to display their own finery and see the world. That appeared to be the case with all, royal and others, except two or three very old priests, who were, or affected to be engaged inwardly in what might originally have been the spirit of this fête."

Mr. Forsyth saw the environs of Paris as well as itself. He visited St. Cloud, Sèvres, Versailles, Trianon, St. Germain, St. Denis, Montmorenci, and the retreat of Rousseau, and among the sights of Paris itself the Scotch college there. He did not find his national feelings gratified by the visit, as he found it "by far the dirtiest and most wretched looking establishment he saw in Paris." He inquired after Scottish students: there were none. Neither was there any Irishman. There was but one English student, and about him the Portier, whom Mr. Forsyth describes as a "stupid, dirty hound," could give no information.

The treatment of the aurist had temporarily improved Mr. Forsyth's hearing, and, that practitioner having set up an external suppuration to be continued for six weeks or two months, his patients now took leave of him and returned home by Rouen and Dieppe. They found the country better than between Paris and Calais. Mr. Forsyth admired Rouen, but the cathedral not so much, as there was a profusion of ornament; but he was much struck with the simple and beautiful proportions of the Dominican Church of St. Ouen. They ascended Mont St. Catherine to see the view it presents, and Mr. Forsyth says: "I do not remember being on an eminence where so extensive and altogether so rich a prospect is obtained." He thought Normandy the best country he saw in France. At Dieppe they had a second edition of the Fête Dieu, conducted in the same way, but, of course, with less pomp than in Paris. He says, however: "I must say that, judging from the faces of the women here, for they were as ninety in the hundred, there appeared more true devotion than I had seen in priests or people at Paris on the former Sunday." The following day they sailed in a steamer for Brighton, and Mr. Forsyth winds up his journal by dating it from—"Half way across the ditch Buonaparte could never

cross, and which I hope no enemy of England will ever be permitted to do."

As the result of his expedition to consult the famous aurist, Mr. Forsyth seems to have derived little or no benefit from his advice. Indeed, the malady gained on him so much that he ultimately became stone-deaf. I had a remarkable experience of this sixteen years later, when I was visiting Edinburgh Castle in his company. It was the anniversary of the Queen's coronation, and they were firing a salute on the occasion. He felt the building shake and asked me what was the cause of it, though the guns were being fired within half-a-dozen yards of him. Many people hardly realised how deaf he was, for he had acquired remarkable facility in understanding what they said from watching the motion of their lips, and if they spoke slowly and rather mouthed their words he could follow them very well. But he always carried a small china slate and a pencil, and if he did not understand what was said, he presented the slate to his companion to write his reply. As he was of a most inquiring mind and resolved to be at the bottom of everything, while he was always talking when walking with anybody, the slate was much in requisition. Deaf people have the credit of speaking softly and low, but

this was not the way with him. His voice was loud and hearty, and sometimes passers-by had the benefit of remarks that his companion would rather they should not have heard. One anecdote of his deafness gave rise to rather a ludicrous scene. He rang his bell one day, and the servant going to answer it found the door locked and of course could not make him hear. She therefore went and told his daughter, Catherine, who was equally at a loss what to do, for he was now becoming angry at the neglect of his summons, and the bell was going furiously. His room opened into another which went by the name of the middle room, and in this the whole household was collected anxiously consulting how they were to communicate with him. At length a bright idea struck Miss Catherine, and she began to dance in the middle room, jumping straight up and down after the manner of the "Perfect Cure" when that extraordinary entertainment seized upon the fashionable world. The result was that the house, which was an ancient one, shook pretty considerably, and Mr. Forsyth, who was dressing, began to wonder what was the matter. This brought him to the door, which he found he had locked, and an explanation followed his opening it.

But this sad infirmity, which would have withdrawn most men from active life, had no such effect on Mr. Forsyth. It seemed rather to develop his other faculties. His correspondence never ceased, and it was carried on, not only with his children and grandchildren in all parts of the world, but with a very large circle of friends and acquaintances. He was well up in all the current questions of the day, and able to write and talk on most subjects, having the knack of interesting himself in the tastes and pursuits of others. He thought for himself, and his thoughts were always on the side of rational progress. When the late Provost Grant projected the Morayshire Railway, which he carried out amid a good deal of sneering opposition from younger men "who could not see the advantage of it," Mr. Forsyth stood by the Provost, and the local paper, in the obituary article on him, recalled the fact that at fourscore he was to be seen walking beside the Provost to cut the first turf on the line. His mind never flagged, and in the case of the railway his judgment was sound, for the original scheme, which was from Elgin to Lossiemouth, is a financial success, and the shareholders would have received fair dividends had the plan not been extended to carry the line into

Strathspey, though even that part of it would have been better but for the jealousies and rivalries of the Great North of Scotland and Highland lines.

Nothing delighted Mr. Forsyth more than to receive long letters from his grandchildren. It did not matter what it was about. An account of a trip amid Himalayan scenery and the impressions caused thereby, or a disquisition on Indian frontier politics varied with notes on the opium traffic in China; or the horrors of the coolie trade from that country, which had to be regulated some years ago in the interests of humanity and for the credit of Christendom; or the wonders of the Andes, and the intrigues and revolutions of the republics of South America, all found in him an attentive and appreciative reader, and his replies showed the activity of his mind, and the interest he took in the surroundings of his grandsons. Here is an extract from a letter written to one of them in 1855, less than four years before his death, when he was 87 years of age:—

"I acknowledge with great pleasure your long and satisfactory account of the journeyings and sight-seeings you have had during your honeymoon. I thank you very much for the kind minuteness you have entered into in your

description of them. I never was in Ireland, which I regret much, so that every step in your progress was new and highly interesting to me and your three aunts. Had you been favoured with steadily fine weather your Irish tour must have been truly delightful. But the sweet and placid light of your own moon, and the sunny brightness that filled your young hearts would more than abundantly compensate for a few cloudy skies and wet roads.

"You have a happy art in carrying me along with you, by selecting the finest and most striking points in the scenery you describe and enriching it with pleasing incidents as they arise. I felt, in tracing your journey through Ireland, Wales, and England, and in the great metropolis, as if one of the party, and derived much enjoyment from everything new to me. While in Wales I regret your losing the beautiful Wye. I have been all my life long anxious to see the course of that wonderful river, and especially Chepstow, but constantly disappointed by circumstances I could not control. Your description of Oxford, the Cathedral, and the metropolis revived early impressions, and brought out many associations that have been slumbering in my mind for ages,

with new impressions created since my last visit upwards of thirty years ago.

"But after all is told, Home, sweet Home is the lodestone to the traveller, and it only gives rest and happiness. Many, many thanks for the labour you have taken to satisfy a foolish craving in my mind, ever since I was a boy of twelve years, after scenery and adventures. I hope the 'Poteen' will reach us by Christmas-day, that I may have a flourish about it before the assembled kindred." His correspondent had announced that he had got some in Ireland for him. "Many thanks for so kind a remembrance at such a distance, in an article too that I have always wished to taste, but never had the opportunity. Your health, happiness, and prosperity shall gladden our lips in the first glass." And then he makes the following request, as my brother's house had introduced vicuña into England: "As the 'Poteen' will be coming in a box, if you can find in your counting-house or warehouse any of the soft vicuña wool, which I find so comfortable to my poor ears, I will bless you for half a pound of it; but no more, as, with what remains of my friend James Johnston's present, this supply will certainly carry me to my grave." Mr. Forsyth was stone deaf for rather more than half his life.

CHAPTER VII.

ELGIN CATHEDRAL AND SCHOOLS.

MR. FORSYTH'S GREAT INTEREST IN ELGIN CATHEDRAL—STATE OF THAT RUIN WHEN HE TOOK IT IN HAND—JOHN SHANKS—EXERTIONS OF MR. FORSYTH TO INTEREST THE GOVERNMENT—HIS SUCCESS—REMOVAL OF ACCUMULATED RUBBISH—THE RUIN PRESERVED AND PUT INTO ORDER, AND SOME FUNDS GRANTED FOR ITS MAINTENANCE—OTHER ANTIQUITIES OF ELGIN—PARALLEL BETWEEN ITS HIGH STREET AND THAT OF EDINBURGH—THE SCHOOLS OF ELGIN—HIS EXERTIONS IN BUILDING AND SUPPORTING THEM.

THROUGHOUT his long life Mr. Forsyth took the most persevering interest in the pride and glory of Elgin—the ruin of its magnificent Cathedral. It is the finest ruin in Scotland. Some have compared the church of Melrose Abbey to it, but though the great east window of Melrose may be finer than any window in Elgin, as a whole I think an unprejudiced person would admit there was really no comparison between them. Elgin Cathedral was founded by Bishop Andrew Moray in 1224, and was burned by the Wolf of Badenoch, Alexander Stuart son of King Robert II., in 1330 during the episco-

pate of Alexander Barr. This bishop began to rebuild it, but the money came in slowly, and the church was only finished by the alienation of one-third of the episcopal revenues for the purpose, by resolution of the Chapter in 1414. About 1506 the great centre steeple fell down. Next year Bishop Foreman began to rebuild it, and it was finished in 1538, and the height of the tower and spire was 198 feet. The church was entire at the Reformation, and it was not then injured by the Protestant mob which has been unjustly credited with its destruction. It was the Privy Council of Scotland which began that work by the following Act of 14th February 1567–8. "Seeing provision must be made for entertaining the Men of War (soldiers) whose services cannot be spared until the rebellious and disobedient subjects be reduced: Therefore appoint that the lead be taken from the Cathedral Churches in Aberdeen and Elgin, and sold for sustentation of the said Men of War. And command and charge the Earl of Huntly, Sheriff of Aberdeen and his Deputes, Alexander Dunbar of Cumnock, Knight, Sheriff of Elgin and Forres and his Deputes, William Bishop of Aberdeen, Patrick Bishop of Moray, &c. That they defend and assist Alexander Clerk and William Birnie and their servants in

taking down and rolling the said lead, &c. Signed R. M." Accordingly, the churches were stripped and the lead was shipped for Holland, but the ship in which it was foundered soon after leaving Aberdeen. It appears, however, from a meeting of the Privy Council in Aberdeen in 1569, that the good Regent Moray did not approve of this, and a tax was laid on the benefices in Moray to restore the covering; but, in consequence of the murder of the Regent by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, it fell through. In this state the wood of the roof rotted and that fell in, and in 1711 the great tower and spire fell, and throughout the eighteenth century the building was left to take care of itself. The late Mr. Wharton Duff of Orton used to say that about the end of that century, or beginning of the present one, the Cathedral was perfectly open and exposed, and was a receptacle for every kind of filth and rubbish. At last public opinion awoke to the scandal, and when Mr. Joseph King of Newmill was Provost of Elgin in 1806–9, an enclosure wall was built round the ruin to keep abominations out, but nothing was done to the building itself which was rapidly going to pieces.

It may surprise some to find the bishops

associated with such vandalism as is above described; but the Episcopacy which existed in Scotland after the Reformation under the Stuarts was not as we now know it in England. Mr. Robert Young, in the "Annals of Elgin," says: "There was no instrumental music, no liturgy, and no high ritualism. The Church was governed by Presbyteries and Synods, and the Bishop occupied no higher seat than his brethren except that he was perpetual moderator of Synod* and Presbytery. In all other respects it resembled in its forms a Presbyterian Church." I believe this to be correct except in the matter of the liturgy. The Kirk had a liturgy. In 1557 it adopted the Second Book of Common Prayer of Edward VI. of England, and in 1560 substituted for that the Book of Common Order of John Knox. This continued to be the liturgy of the Kirk until 1645 when it adopted the Westminster Directory, but the Scots' Commissioners tried hard to retain their liturgy before they gave in to the feeling on the subject among the English Divines. The bishops were not treated with much respect. They were not popular, being imposed on the Church, against its will and that of the people,

* Provincial Synods in Scotland were, I believe, conterminous with the Episcopal dioceses.

by the Court, and, as lay impropriators had laid hands on the greater part of their ancient revenues, they were called in derision "Tulchan Bishops." *

However, the Cathedral was in this delapidated state when Mr. Forsyth took it in hand. He had a relative, Mr. Adam Longmore, in the Exchequer at Edinburgh, and through this gentleman he interested the Crown authorities in the ruins, and induced them to make some grants for the repair of the building and give a small salary to a keeper, which have been the means of preserving what was left. The keeper who was appointed was quite a character, named John Shanks, and he was always at work clearing away the accumulated rubbish under the directions of Mr. Forsyth, who took the most tender care of everything which John's spade laid bare. One day John's spade struck something hard in front of the principal entrance at the west end. He immediately informed Mr. Forsyth, and the steps leading up to the Cathedral as now disclosed were discovered. This clearly pointed to a general lower level of approach, and Mr. Forsyth had to set to work and find the means

* "Tulchan" means in Scotch the skin of a calf stuffed and placed to deceive the cow and make her yield her milk.

to pay for the necessary labour. This he did with great zeal, and he succeeded in arousing so much interest in it that the place was gradually put into the order it now is. All the accumulated debris was cleared away, and many forgotten tombstones given to the light. The actual level of the floor was reached, the foundations of the pillars separating the nave from the aisles were laid bare, the towers where shaky were secured by iron bands and stanchions, a neat lodge was built for the keeper, and, what had once been a scandal and disgrace alike to the nation and the town, became the pride of the one and the ornament of the other.

John Shanks, who was long the keeper and cicerone of the Cathedral under these arrangements, at last got too feeble for the work, and a successor had to be appointed. I well remember the old man, in the days of my boyhood, dressed in stockings and knee breeches with an old red woollen night-cap on his head, spade in hand, dilating on the beauties of his loved charge. Old John was very poor, but Mr. Forsyth was his friend and he made the following appeal to the public :—

"JOHN SHANKS.

"We need scarcely say to the inhabitants of

Elgin that this poor old man is fast hastening to that bourne from whence no traveller returns. He is in much bodily suffering, and suffers all those privations which extreme poverty brings in its train. This should not be; for John in his time has rendered important services to the town of Elgin. From the influence of his own deep enthusiasm in the glory of our Cathedral, he devoted the strength of many years to the removal of the vast mass of rubbish and ruin which for upwards of a century and a half had disfigured and disgraced the interior of that noble building. This he did without public remuneration or even the cheering influence of praise or patronage from any quarter. Having at length, by his little wheelbarrow and spade, succeeded in laying bare a portion of the original floor of the church and the base of one of the pillars that supported its roof, his unassisted endeavours were reported to the Barons of Exchequer (then the guardians of all the ecclesiastical ruins in Scotland), who, on ascertaining the fact, immediately appointed him keeper of the Cathedral with a small annual salary and a temporary reward for his previous exertions. They did more: they gave orders to have the whole mass of rubbish cleared out, which it was utterly impossible that poor John or any other

individual could ever have accomplished alone, and thereby restored the original level of the floor over the whole building. This also led to most substantial and efficient repairs in various parts which were fast crumbling to decay, and, by the liberality of the Barons, at an expense of six or seven hundred pounds, the building has been preserved for perhaps a century to come. Now, to poor John's enthusiasm and activity we owe all these happy results; for no man, high or low, for a period of 150 years previously had ever dreamt of making such an attempt. Hence the community of Elgin is called upon in an especial manner to smooth his passage to the grave, by such contributions as may give him at least the necessaries of life and a few comforts for his declining years.

"All contributions, even of the smallest sum, will be thankfully received and faithfully recorded and applied by Messrs. Forsyth and Young, Booksellers, or the publishers of the *Elgin Courant.*"

It is pleasing to think that the appeal was successful, and the old man's latter days were surrounded by those comforts which were suitable to his station. But it is to be remarked that Mr. Forsyth makes no allusion to his own share of the work, though he assisted,

encouraged, and directed John, and was the channel through which the interest of the authorities was enlisted, and such representations made as induced them to come forward as they did.

The great interest Mr. Forsyth took in the antiquities of Elgin is shown in his projected "Outline," the programme of which is given in Appendix B. Here it will suffice to quote his remark upon the general plan of the town of Elgin. He says: "From all these (public buildings enumerated) may with great truth be deduced the idea that, in building the High Street of Elgin, a very distinct resemblance to the High Street of Edinburgh was kept in view. The Lady Hill represented the Castle Hill of Edinburgh. The jail and St. Giles's Church meant the Cathedral of St. Giles and the old Tolbooth (the Heart of Midlothian). The Cross of Elgin for that of Edinburgh. The College of Elgin for the Edinburgh Canongate, and Elgin Cathedral for Holyrood House and Church. The lofty houses of the nobility and gentry, crowding near the church and the bishop, represent the numerous and large houses of the nobility clustered in the Canongate and round the court of our kings. The closes on both sides of the respective High Streets still present a

faithful picture of one another." The resemblance is undoubted; the principal difference being that, while the Canongate and High Street of Edinburgh form a pretty steep hill, the High Street of Elgin is level. The comparison is kept up too since Mr. Forsyth's day, for, as it is the fashion in Edinburgh to rebuild the old part of the town with excellent new houses in the old Scottish style outwardly, to the great improvement of the picturesque character of the city, so the same fashion has been recently adopted in Elgin, to the great improvement of the appearance of the High Street.

Mr. Forsyth also took a great interest in the education of the town. Elgin being an Episcopal town, a school was founded by Bishop Bricius, 1203–22, and he had it at Spynie where he resided. It was transferred to Elgin by his successor, Bishop Andrew Moray, 1223–42, the founder of the Cathedral Church, and that it was a school of some eminence is shown by its turning out Florentius Volusenus who was a native of Elgin. It seems to have been used as a preparatory school for the Scots College at the University of Paris, founded by Bishop David Moray in 1325. The Elgin school seems to have been called a grammar school in 1489 in an Act of the Chapter of the Diocese of

Moray, and at the Reformation it was made over to the management of the Town Council. In 1594, by a charter of James VI., the lands of Maisondieu were made over to the Town Council, to support, after the bedesmen, a music school called the Sang School, the master of which was the precentor of the Parish Church. The master of the Sang School by degrees became the English master, though he continued precentor, and this was the school at which Mr. Forsyth had received his education, and at it writing and arithmetic were also taught. So that at the close of the last century there were two schools, a Grammar or Latin School, and a so-called Sang School teaching English and Arithmetic. The buildings, however, were small, unsuitable, and ruinous, and in 1799 were declared by the magistrates not worthy of repair, so they resolved to build new schools. In this Mr. Forsyth took an active part. He had now a considerable connection and had become a well-known man, and he exerted himself greatly by writing to his friends to raise funds for the new academy. The Grammar and Sang Schools were now united as the Elgin Academy, and new buildings were erected, consisting of three schools, a Latin school, an English school, and a Mathematical

school, in one enclosure which formed the playground. At this school my brothers and myself received our early education, and it was a successful and well-managed school until the disruption of the Kirk in 1843. In 1844 the Town Council appointed Mr. Donald Morrison to be the Rector of the Academy and head of the Latin school. Mr. Morrison belonged to the Free Kirk, and the Presbytery of the Established Kirk, who thought they had authority over the Academy as they were the official examiners thereof, refused to acknowledge him as Rector, and assumed the right to fix the day of examination hitherto determined by the Town Council. This brought on a dispute between the Council and the Presbytery. In the first instance the Council concurred in the day fixed by the Presbytery, and at the same time warned them that the right lay with the Council and they intended to exercise it in future. However, the Presbytery fixed the day next year, and the Town Council fixed an earlier one. When the Presbytery assembled they found the doors locked and the school dismissed. They then filed a suit in the Court of Session to make good their pretensions, and after a protracted litigation—for this became a test case for town schools all over Scotland, and

the Town Councils of many Scotch burghs supported that of Elgin, while the General Assembly of the Church took up the case of the Presbytery—the Court of Session found for the Presbytery in 1861. They, however, did not enjoy their triumph long, for, under the circumstances the judgment could not stand as a rule for the future, and Government took it up, and next session of Parliament an act was passed removing burgh schools from the authority of the Established Church. The incident, however, did much harm to the school which had suffered from other causes. The opening of the free school attached to General Anderson's institution in 1831 took away many scholars, and a few years afterwards a Trades School was established, giving a cheaper but inferior education, to which many of the smaller tradesmen sent their children. In 1859, when it became known that the decision would probably go against the Town Council and the Presbytery would probably dismiss Mr. Morrison, that gentleman set up a private school, and took all his boarders, some forty, away with him, and the Academy came to a low ebb. But of late years it has revived, and a new and more commodious building has been erected, and it is now a flourishing institution. Mr. Forsyth,

however, did not live to see that. He died while the struggle was still going on, and it was a subject which gave him great distress whenever it was alluded to in his presence. Had he lived to see the new academy and the restored peace, he would have indeed rejoiced exceedingly.

CHAPTER VIII.

PUBLIC CHARACTER.

MR. FORSYTH AS A LOCAL PUBLIC MAN — HIS ENERGY AND SYMPATHY WITH IMPROVEMENT — HIS INFLUENCE AND EXTENSIVE CORRESPONDENCE — CASE OF THE LOSS OF THE WHOLE MALE FISHER POPULATION OF STOTFIELD— MR. FORSYTH'S EXERTIONS TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR FAMILIES—THE FLOODS IN MORAY 1829 — BECOMES SECRETARY OF THE RELIEF FUND—TESTIMONY OF SIR THOMAS DICK LAUDER TO HIS SERVICES — GREAT INFLUENCE OF MR. FORSYTH IN PROVIDING INTRODUCTIONS AND CAREERS FOR DESERVING YOUNG MEN—PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGMENTS OF MR. FORSYTH'S PUBLIC SERVICES—HIS HOSPITALITY.

MR. FORSYTH'S character as a local public man is the property of the shire of Moray and the town of Elgin. At no period of his life did his means ever enable him to do a tithe of what he would have wished; but, so far as he could, his house and his head, his energy, and his hand were always at the service of others and of the public. In his station of life there was no man so well known between Aberdeen and Inverness; and, so far as Elgin is concerned, there is nothing of a public nature, no improvement that can be pointed out with which he was not more

or less intimately connected, and latterly, when his infirmities prevented him being in the foremost ranks as before, his warm interest and sympathy attended every measure of amelioration and advancement. Though he lived to the age of ninety, Mr. Forsyth may in one sense be said never to have been an old man. His temperament was eminently sanguine. He never evinced that disinclination for change which is the usual characteristic of advancing age. His ideas always expanded to the level of the day and frequently carried him far in advance of it, and any scheme, which had for its object the improvement of the human family or the development of latent resources of any kind, found in him an attentive listener, and generally a warm sympathiser and advocate.

In 1806 a dreadful calamity occurred at Stotfield near Lossiemouth. On the 25th December three boats, containing the whole of the seamen in the place—twenty-one in number—put to sea, and a sudden storm arising they all perished, no vestige of either men or boats being ever after seen. By this seventeen widows, forty-seven children, and eight aged parents were left destitute. Their case was however taken up by the minister of the parish—Drainie—the Rev. Lewis Gordon, and he appealed to the public, in which

he was ably aided by the help and advocacy of Mr. Forsyth. Their exertions were so successful, that no less a sum than £1152, 2s. 3d. was collected for the relief of the bereaved families. The mere collection of the fund however was only part of the work, and a tablet in the parish church of Drainie records that, with Mr. Gordon and his successor Dr. Rose, a committee of gentlemen were associated in its administration. These were Mr. Brander of Pitgaveny the proprietor, the minister of Elgin the Rev. Wm. Gordon, and Messrs. Brander, Macandrew, and Jack, all of Elgin. The real management of the fund fell to the lot of Mr. Jack, Mr. Forsyth's cousin and dearest friend, and the two between them so well administered it, that the widows and aged parents received annuities, and the children aliment until they reached the age of fourteen, being brought up to pursue the useful though hazardous occupation of their fathers. The fund lasted until 1842, when it was expended and the accounts were closed. The tablet in the church was then erected by a few subscribers, to record this signal calamity and the long continued benevolence and sustained regard for others shown, by which its consequences were mitigated and repaired.

In 1829 the province of Moray was devastated

by the most terrible floods ever known. A dense black mass of clouds coming from the north-east appear to have been stopped by the Cairngorm and Monadliadh mountains, and the rain poured down on them with unprecedented fury and on all the hills between. The rivers having their sources in these Highlands rose enormously, and the mass of waters rushing down the valleys swept everything before them. The distress and destitution of those living on the river banks were very great, and the occasion was one which called forth all the sympathies and energies of Mr. Forsyth's nature. A committee was formed in Elgin to collect subscriptions and administer them for the benefit of the sufferers, and he was chosen secretary. Chiefly by his indefatigable exertions a sum amounting to £1470, 10s. 1d. was raised, no small part of which came from Mr. Forsyth's Morayshire friends in London, and an account of the expenditure of this fund is published as an appendix to Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's "Account of the Great Floods of August 1829 in the Province of Moray." With this account Sir Thomas records as follows:—

"I am indebted to Mr. Isaac Forsyth of Elgin for the following abstract of the Subscription Flood Fund, which, being particularly appropriated to the destitute sufferers in the county of

Elgin, was very much increased by his charitable zeal as Secretary to the Elgin Central Committee of Management. His labours have been unremitting and unwearied, and cannot fail to secure to him a yet more honourable, though perhaps less extended fame than rewarded his deceased brother Joseph as author of the admirable and scholarlike "Tour in Italy." Small as has been the relief afforded, yet the liberality of those who contributed, and especially of the London Morayshire Club who so promptly set the example, will be long warmly remembered by those who participated in it." On another occasion Sir Thomas stated, speaking of Mr. Forsyth with reference to his exertions on this occasion, "For this alone, if for nothing else, Mr. Forsyth's name deserves to be handed down to posterity."

The public institutions in Elgin with which Mr. Forsyth was connected, besides those mentioned elsewhere, viz., the Academy, the Morayshire Railway, and the preservation of the Cathedral, were the building of the Assembly Rooms, the establishment of the Museum, and it was chiefly through his interest with the then Lord Fife that Elgin is indebted for those beautiful paths on the banks of the Lossie known as the Ladies' Walk.

In nothing was Mr. Forsyth's active benevolence more shown than in the helping hand he afforded to many young men leaving Elgin on their start in life. He had friends in many parts of the world who loved and esteemed him, and a letter from him was a recommendation that never failed to ensure a cordial social welcome, and in not a few instances a satisfactory start in life. The local paper, in its obituary notice, says: "Scarcely a young man of good character left Elgin during the last fifty years without a recommendation or introduction from Mr. Forsyth to some respectable or influential employer of labour. It was the same whether the young man was going to any of the larger towns and cities of the British Empire, to the colonies, or to foreign lands. Mr. Forsyth had friends everywhere, and he was ever ready to put in a word for a townsman. We believe that a greater number of Elgin men can trace their first successful step in life to Mr. Forsyth's influence and kind recommendation than to that of any or of all other men put together. Good character and correct habits were necessary to secure his countenance; where these existed, his recommendations were of no ordinary kind, and at this moment there are hundreds of our countrymen in all parts of the world ready 'to

rise up and call him blessed' for his exertions in their behalf."

In 1818 Mr. Forsyth had occasion to visit London, and he was there entertained at dinner by the London Morayshire Club, not a few of those present being indebted to him for their first start in life. So highly was he thought of, that, with the toast of his health, was presented to him a gold snuff-box of the value of fifty guineas, as a testimony of his public worth and of the private regard of the subscribers.

In 1851 he was invited to sit for his portrait by a deputation of his fellow-citizens, with a view to its being placed in the Assembly Rooms as a memorial of one who had so thoroughly, and in all respects acted out his citizenship. The painter was Mr. Innes of Edinburgh, and the likeness is decidedly a good one. A copy of it forms the frontispiece. The following is on the frame:—

"ISAAC FORSYTH, ESQ., ELGIN.

"This Portrait is placed here by the desire and at the expense of his Fellow-Citizens and Friends at a distance, as a mark of respect for him, and in approbation of the zealous and valuable assistance given by him in promoting Public Improvements of Elgin and the welfare of many of its Young Men during sixty years of his active and useful life. Painted in his eighty-third year—

1851."

When the portrait was hung, the Provost of Elgin wrote to Mr. Forsyth on the 18th July 1851, as follows:—

"My dear Sir,—I have great pleasure in announcing that your portrait—painted at the request of your fellow-citizens and friends—has been placed in the Assembly Rooms, where it will remain as a token of their esteem for one who, during a long life, has been the founder and the zealous and unwearied promoter of our most valued and useful institutions—who has ever delighted in promoting the prosperity of Elgin, and who has not been more conspicuous in starting young men when entering on the world and assisting and cheering them on through life, than in welcoming them back with unbounded kindness and hospitality.

"While I will not attempt to enumerate the many benefits and advantages you have conferred on your native Town and County, I cannot help thinking that, during the evening of your life, it must be no small consolation to you to reflect on the vast improvements effected by the Morayshire Farmer Club, on the benefits flowing from our improved Academical Institutions, and on the many advantages derived by the community both from our Public Rooms and

our Public Walks, in all of which you took so decided an interest and with which your name is so closely associated. May I hope that this spontaneous tribute of regard will be the means of stimulating others in after generations 'to go and do likewise.' Allow me to add that it will always be pleasing to me to think that, while Chief Magistrate of Elgin, it has thus fallen to my lot to give expression to the feelings of her citizens, and to discharge so pleasant a duty towards her best and most cherished son. I remain, my dear sir, yours very sincerely,

"JAMES GRANT.

"ISAAC FORSYTH, Esq."

To this Mr. Forsyth replied on the 21st July 1851:—

"MY DEAR PROVOST,—I beg to acknowledge, with that respect and gratitude which it so strongly calls forth, your presentation of the letter conveying the sentiments of yourself, the committee, and the subscribers towards me, with the portrait now so conspicuously placed in the Public Assembly Rooms of our good town. This is an honour, as you and they are well aware, unsolicited, unexpected, and, I fear, unmerited. The services, which you are pleased to notice in such elegant terms, were the spon-

taneous effect of an irresistible feeling for the welfare and prosperity of Elgin cultivated from my earliest youth, carrying with it a rich reward in the consciousness of its purity, and in the frequent expression of approbation by the friends and companions whom I loved. To have these services thus held forth to become a credit to those who shall succeed and are dear and near to me, not only gilds the evening of my declining day, but touches a chord in the heart of every man; for, 'even in our ashes live our wonted fires.'

"You have most kindly alluded to the assistance which I was fortunately enabled to give to the improvement that had arisen in our town and county during the last half century; and I most gladly avail myself of this opportunity to do justice to the memory of a friend in Exchequer (Mr. Longmore), who promptly acted on the suggestion, and, through whose veneration for our glorious Cathedral and influence with the Right Honourable the Barons, we owe the foundation of those substantial repairs it has since received, as well as its thorough clearance from the vast mass of debris that so long debased and disgraced it.

"I request your acceptance of my most grateful thanks for your personal kindness in

this communication, and to my respected friends the Committee for all the trouble it must have occasioned you and them. I remain, my dear Provost, your obliged and obedient servant,

"ISAAC FORSYTH.

"To JAMES GRANT, Esq.,
Chief Magistrate of Elgin."

It only remains to mention Mr. Forsyth's hospitality. It was simply unbounded, and, I fear, must have really impaired his means. Not only was it his greatest delight to entertain his own friends, to whom his house and his table were ever open; but, being a well-known man, when strangers visiting Elgin sought introductions from people who knew the place, it was generally to Mr. Forsyth they were given, and the hearty welcome these strangers received was well-known all over the north of Scotland. There were few visitors to Elgin who did not take back kindly remembrances of the genial old man whose greatest delight was to show them the Cathedral, and expatiate on the grandeur and dignity of the old bishops of Moray, once the lords of all these fair lands and noble buildings which adorned the Laigh. When the sons of Elgin returned from distant

lands, his was among the first faces to greet and welcome them, and many, who knew nobody else, recognised and foregathered with him. He was a beacon and a landmark to all Moray men of his day both at home and abroad.

CHAPTER IX.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

POLITICAL CHARACTER OF MR. FORSYTH — GREAT CHANGES WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING HIS LONG LIFE—SLOW POLITICAL PROGRESS—STATE OF REPRESENTATION IN SCOTLAND AND IN ELGIN—ANECDOTE OF PARTY FEELING AND UNSCRUPULOUSNESS—REFORM MOVEMENT OF 1830—PART TAKEN BY MR. FORSYTH — REFORM ACT — MUNICIPAL REFORM ACT—LIBERAL CHARACTER OF MR. FORSYTH'S OPINIONS, BUT NATIONAL AND PATRIOTIC — AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE — FRENCH REVOLUTION — CHARTISM — REMEDIAL LEGISLATION—POSITION OF THE COUNTRY AT MR. FORSYTH'S DEATH.

MR. FORSYTH always took a great interest in the political questions of the day. He was a consistent Whig, which was the name by which the party of progress then went. He was also emphatically a Liberal, not in the wretched sense of the word prevalent nowadays, when we have the dictum of one of its leaders that its principal duty is to turn out the Tories, but in the primitive and proper sense of the word, a man devoted to freedom himself in thought, word, and action, and respecting the like quality in others. Indeed, considering the progress

this country made in the course of Mr. Forsyth's long life, it was almost impossible for a man of his healthy intellect and benevolent temper to be anything else than a Liberal in politics, seeing that he was not interested in the maintenance of existing abuses.

The year before Mr. Forsyth was born James Watt had invented the condenser, and in 1769 he had completed the first real practical steam-engine for pumping water out of mines. Yet Mr. Forsyth lived not only to see the wonderful machinery by which, through its agency, cotton and wool are turned into textile fabrics of a beauty and cheapness then incomprehensible, but he saw the navy a steam one, the ocean traversed by magnificent steam-fleets, railways covering the whole country and running into his own remote native town of Elgin, and a steam-engine in every one of the first-class farms in his own laigh of Moray. The year before his birth Lord Clive came home, having laid the foundations of the Indian Empire, acquired for his country Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and made his countrymen, or some of them at least, comprehend the imperial mission which lay before them. At that time our territory in India consisted of these three provinces, the jagir of Madras a small territory round the

town and fort, and the island of Bombay which was part of the marriage portion of Catherine of Braganza the wife of Charles II. When Mr. Forsyth died, the British Empire in India stretched from the Mergui Archipelago to Beloochistan, and from Cape Comorin to the Pamir of Central Asia where our frontier marches with that of Russia. In the year Mr. Forsyth was born, Captain Cook set out on his first voyage to the South Seas. Canada had then been ceded for five years only. Questions were only beginning to arise between the mother-country and its colonies in America. When he was a lad the American War began, and he was fourteen years of age when the independence of the United States was acknowledged. He lived to the eve of the war between North and South, and saw the Union stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific containing all the territory it now holds. In his lifetime Upper or Western Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia were settled, as well as British Columbia, and the whole of what is now the Dominion of Canada was united in one government under the British Crown; and, of Captain Cook's discoveries, Australia and New Zealand have become great and flourishing colonies forming a New Britain in the South Seas.

In the year he was born, the Forth and Clyde Canal was begun and the Bridgewater Canal was only seven years opened. Ere he died England was covered with canals. At his birth, except General Wade's roads already mentioned, the only road in the North was an unbridged one from Aberdeen to Inverness through Elgin. At his death the country was covered with magnificent macadamised and bridged roads almost wherever they could be carried. Railways covered the land from one end to the other. Penny-post and electric telegraphs were established. Newspapers were published in every little town, Elgin having two. Cheap literature was spread over the length and breadth of the land. Regular steam communication brought the islands of Scotland in touch with the rest of the country.

In the midst of this wonderful march of national and material progress the political institutions of the country long remained behindhand. When Mr. Forsyth was born the contest between Wilkes and the government of George III. was at its height. The king was endeavouring to establish arbitrary government by influence. The House of Commons was composed of the nominees of the territorial magnates, or elected by small constituencies of

close corporations who shamelessly sold their votes. Only the counties and a few of the largest towns in England had any independence, and many of the largest towns, such as Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham, had no representatives at all. And it must not be forgotten, in our admiration of the stand the Whigs of that day made in the Commons against the arbitrary measures of the king's government, that they joined the court party in resisting the attempts of Chatham and of Pitt to obtain some more just representation for the people. But, bad as was the state of England, it was nothing to that of Scotland. There the whole representation was vile, and Elgin, which was a very ancient Royal Burgh, had one of the very worst constitutions going. It was governed by a Provost and Town Council which elected men to fill vacancies in its own body, and this Town Council, so composed, elected the member for Parliament. An incident which occurred in 1820 will very well illustrate the state of affairs.

Parties then ran very high, and though nominally the contest was between Whigs and Tories it was really between the two leading families of Duffs and Grants. Elgin was the head of a group of five boroughs, the other four being Banff, Cullen, Inverurie, and Kintore.

Each party had two of these boroughs in its interest, and the decision lay with Elgin which was divided. The Duff party, which apprehended that their rival would carry the election by the casting vote, seized one of the Bailies in the Grant interest just before the election, hurried him to Lossiemouth, put him on board a fishing-boat, and carried him across the firth to Golspie in Sutherland, where they put him ashore at a time when it was impossible for him to reach Elgin for the election. Their candidate was therefore returned. But at that time Lady Anne Grant, sister of the Earl of Seafield, lived in Grant Lodge, the jointure house of the Grant family in Elgin, and rumour went up the country that she had been insulted and ill-used by the people of Elgin. Immediately 300 armed Highlanders collected in Strathspey and marched on Elgin to rescue or protect her ladyship. The consternation in the town was great, for they had no means of defending themselves, and all the traditions of racking and harrying, which were then not exploded as regards the Highlanders, filled men's minds. The Provost and magistrates had therefore to eat humble pie, and proceed in deputation to Lady Anne to beseech her to interfere and protect the town from being plundered. She agreed to do so, and sent her

people to bring the men to Grant Lodge. The grounds were then surrounded by a high wall, which I well remember and a part of which still exists, but Lady Anne, not unreasonably, represented that the men had made a very long march and would require rest and refreshment before they could be induced to go back, and that the town should provide the food and drink. This the Town Council did, and the lady kept the men within her own enclosure, where, after a good meal, they slept in the grounds, and next day, after another meal, left the town at her ladyship's command. It is satisfactory to know, however, that the high-handed proceedings of the Duff party were not successful: the election under the circumstances was disallowed, and the Grant candidate was declared to be the sitting member. Shortly after this, the Duff party won over first one and then another of the Grant party to their side, which was indeed the popular one, and then, having a majority, they eventually excluded the Grant party altogether.

These proceedings could not fail to revolt liberal-minded men, and, when the Reform agitation commenced in 1830, a Reform Club was formed in Elgin in which Mr. Forsyth took a leading part. He assisted with all his power both by pen and voice, and though his conduct

did not meet with the approval of some of his oldest and most influential friends, such as the Duke and Duchess of Gordon, he never swerved from the cause on that account. Those who were principally conjoined with him in this struggle were Sir Andrew Leith Hay, who became the first member of Parliament for the burghs under the Reform Act, Admiral Duff of Drummuir, Dr. John Paul, and Mr. William Grigor, all men well known in Elgin. In 1833 was passed an act for reforming the constitution of the burghs in Scotland, and the Town Council was thenceforward elected by the parliamentary constituency. With this measure the old close constitution came to an end, and the strong party-feeling which had possessed the town subsided by degrees. Thenceforward the politics of the town took a decidedly Liberal turn, with which Mr. Forsyth fully sympathised, but his infirmity of deafness had now increased so much that he was precluded from taking any part in public meetings or addresses, as he could hear nothing that went forward. He followed everything, however, by reading the newspapers, and privately encouraged his friends by his advice and approval.

Mr. Forsyth was too young to have political opinions at the time of the American struggle for independence, but in after-life he always

expressed the highest admiration for the character and conduct of Washington, and he kept print portraits of Washington and Franklin in his room. In his earlier days there was, as a general rule, little political interest rife in such a community as that of Elgin. They had not daily papers to keep it alive, and it was at elections, or on serious occasions alone that the political feeling manifested itself. Mr. Forsyth came of age in the year the French Revolution began, and, like most young men of Liberal tendencies, he hailed it at first as the emancipation of a great country from a government unjust in almost every relation to the people. But, as it developed itself into the monster of oppression and terror of 1793–94, he, with the generality of his countrymen, turned from it with horror and loathing. The orgies of the Goddess of Reason shocked his religious ideas. The *fête* to the Supreme Being appeared to his reverent mind hardly less blasphemous. When the proclamation, of war to the palace and peace to the cottage, was issued by the French Government, and men were called to revolutionise the government of their country by the aid of French soldiers, Mr. Forsyth felt like a Scotsman and a patriot. His Liberalism was not of that rancorous kind which saw in the defeat

of its own countrymen nothing but the humiliation of the political party to which it was opposed, and was unable to spare a cheer for the national triumphs because they reflected credit on the rivals whom they hated. No! he joined in feeling pride in the triumphs of his countrymen and in deploring their mishaps, and he condemned the opposition of the party to which he belonged in obstructing, to the best of their ability, the successful prosecution of the war. There is no record of the feelings with which he regarded the attitude of the people in 1817–19, and those who could have told are now gone; but he did not approve of the Chartist agitation and the mode in which they sought to intimidate people into supporting their views. In these days of political excitement, when men remember nothing, and the former pledges and speeches of people who call themselves statesmen, even of two or three years back, are treated like history revealed by the hieroglyphics of Egypt or the cuneiform inscriptions of Nineveh, Chartism is a dream of former ages; and yet middle-aged men might remember it, if the high pressure of modern political life allowed of the exercise of memory. The five points of the people's charter were only formulated in 1838. They were universal suffrage, vote by ballot,

annual parliaments, the abolition of the property qualification, and the payment of members. Two of these points, the ballot, and no property qualification for members, are the law of the land. Universal, or, more properly, manhood suffrage is very nearly approached. In respect of the other two no change in the law has yet been made. These two may, however, be within a measurable distance of practical politics. The extreme Radicals wish that members should be paid, and there is a large amount of influential opinion that seven years without an appeal to the country is too long for a parliament to sit. If the term is interfered with, it is not improbable that annual parliaments may be preferred to triennial ones on practical grounds, as an annual election would come very much as a matter of course, and not afford the ground for the agitation before it to which a present election gives rise, and from which, it is to be feared, a triennial one would not be exempt. Mr. Forsyth, like all reasonable men, was indignant at the attempt made by Feargus O'Connor to coerce the Government by force of numbers, and cordially approved the resolution of the Government to prevent the demonstration, which, as soon as that determination was made known, collapsed like the windbag it was.

The remedial administrative legislation which began with the reformed Parliament found a consistent supporter in Mr. Forsyth. He approved of the amelioration of the Criminal Law, the reform of the English Poor Law and the enactment of a similar one for Scotland, the measures for the care and protection of lunatics, the Factory Acts with which the name of Lord Shaftesbury is so honourably associated, the abolition of slavery, and the free-trade measures of Sir Robert Peel, which began with his famous budget of 1843 and culminated in the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. In fact, Mr. Forsyth was far less of a party man and much more one who rejoiced in and sympathised with the progress of freedom, the spread of knowledge, and the material welfare of the people. Before his death the Crimean War had been happily concluded by a peace in which this country came out with honour, and the neck of the Indian Mutiny had been broken, the Queen's Government had been proclaimed, and the mere remnants of the revolt were being trodden down. Never had England more completely vindicated her claim to be a great nation than in 1859, and Mr. Forsyth passed away amid a manifestation of national greatness and security which gratified his patriotic heart.

CHAPTER X.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF MR. FORSYTH—EARLY PIETY—ADVICE TO HIS GRANDSON—EFFECT ON HIS MIND OF HIGH MASS AT NOTRE DAME DE PARIS—DISPUTE IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND IN 1838—HIGH CHURCH PARTY—MR. FORSYTH ADHERES TO THAT PARTY—CAUSES OF THE SCHISM OF THE FREE CHURCH—BITTER FEELING WHICH AROSE SINCE GREATLY SOFTENED—DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS LIFE—ANALOGY AND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIGH CHURCH PARTIES IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND—DEMAND FOR DISESTABLISHMENT GROWING—ITS PROBABLE DIFFERENT EFFECT IN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

MR. FORSYTH early evinced great indications of that piety which distinguished him through life. He was always ready to give God the praise and the glory, and, like all truly good men, he had a deep and abiding sense of sin. In 1787 at Aberdeen, when nineteen years of age, he appears to have first approached the sacramental table, and, with reference to his intention to do so, he thus writes to his mother. "It gives me peculiar pleasure to find that you were so profitably and so delightfully employed lately at Duffus. Such occasions are indeed pleasant

waterpools in the weary journey of life. They refresh and invigorate the mind greatly. It is proposed to administer the Sacrament in this place on the second Sunday of September; and oh! how much need of preparation for appearing in so august an assembly, and on an occasion so venerable, so sacred! what need of purity in the inward man and how much contrition and sorrow for past offences! But what a noble field presents itself for expanding all the amiable affections and graces of the mind, extensive indeed and delightful beyond comprehension. Assist me, mother, with your earnest dear prayers, for I am ashamed, nay, afraid almost to go forward, yet I am aware of the danger of lingering behind, and will endeavour to trust to the mercy of our blessed Lord which is extensive as His own infinite nature." His piety was free from all taint of bigotry and cant. He was largely imbued with the spirit of toleration in its best sense, and in religion, as in everything else, his nature was pervaded with that broad and enlightened liberality which, asserting what it believes to be true, yet respects the opinions and judges charitably of the motives of others, and, even in all the confidence of faith, remembers that man is but a fallible creature, and that others, though by different ways, may

reach the haven of God's mercy in Christ Jesus our Lord as well as himself.

In the year 1808 Mrs. Forsyth lost her mother. She had gone over to Cromarty to assist in nursing her, and Mr. Forsyth wrote to her on Saturday the 30th July as follows:—

"Yours of Tuesday night only came by last night's post, and that of Wednesday evening in the forenoon of yesterday by Mr. Chalmers. My heart has sunk within me since reading the former. I called on Dr. Stephen and read what relates to our beloved mother, and asked him if there was anything he wished me to say to you. He said there was nothing he could suggest, and seemed displeased that Dr. Macdonald had not written to him. Indeed, he has called several times to inquire, and always wondered he had not heard from him. In my last to you I mentioned this; and wished you to speak to MacD. on the subject, and also that he should have written to Dr. Duncan of Edinburgh.

"But, my dearest, what avails these people and their pretended skill? 'Tis of none effect in this hour of severe conflict. Nature will assert her claim, and we must yield the precious victim. Let us be much engaged in ardent prayer that the passage may be smooth and

serene, and enlivened with that foretaste and assurance of heaven which renders the flesh and the world insignificant and raises the soul infinitely above them. This is the death we must pray for her: it is that too we ought anxiously to pray for ourselves. My love, by looking steadfastly to this event and to this effect of it, and surely if ever creatures could do so we may, we shall be enabled to meet it with a composure and tranquillity unknown to those who have not their minds so well regulated. It delights me that Isabella has borne up so wonderfully. I always said hers was no common mind, and the last seven months has fully proved it. Her reward is before her and it will be most sweet. The reflection of her filial and pious conduct will brighten and illuminate many an hour which otherwise would have been heavy and dark.

"I pray you to write to me instantly on receipt of this. I felt much disappointed on going to the post to-night to find no letter from you. Say if I can be of any use: if I can in any degree comfort the dear sufferer, Isabella, or yourself, and I shall immediately be with you."

Again he writes on the following evening, Sunday. "Your heartrending letter is this

moment received. How rapidly the end approaches! To her how desirable! Though we must grudge the anxiety (*sic*) with which nature claims her victim. Oh! how sweet, how serene the evening sun declines to light her through the gloomy valley to the endless enjoyments of heaven! Oh, my love, that our days may end in the same peaceful manner, and be closed in the same blessed hope!

"As you mention your intention of postponing your next letter till Monday evening, I write a few lines by this post to reach you before you despatch yours, to apprise you that, unless I hear sooner from you, I will only wait here until I can receive yours of Monday evening, which you will be so good as to send purposely to Fort George to arrive here on Tuesday evening. Whatever commissions it contains I will bring with me, and future ones can be brought over in the boat which will bring my brother" (his half brother John) "to Cromarty to pay the last mournful duties to our beloved mother. I regret this delay most exceedingly, but, as it may be convenient to you, shall endure it with all the patience I am able. I have the strongest desire imaginable to see the dear saint and receive her blessing before she leaves us."

In 1843, when the first of his grandchildren to leave home was about to depart, he wrote to him as follows:—"The first thing which every young man should learn is *his duty to God.* Your early education, and the instruction and example of your parents have made you acquainted with that so far, and you should complete this knowledge by reading and studying your Bible, by private meditation and daily prayer, with the perusal of such other books of a religious (but not polemical) character, as are recommended to you by your father and minister. Revere the Sabbath-day, and attend regularly on public worship." Mr. Forsyth was, however, a staunch Scottish Presbyterian, and he makes the following remarks on a celebration of High Mass at the Church of Notre Dame in Paris, at which he was present:—"The gorgeous splendour of the display is much beyond my descriptive powers, and the effect of it all was to excite in my mind pity and disgust. There appeared to me at least two hundred actors engaged in this religious mummery, from the Archbishop himself down to the meanest fiddler in the band. The genuflexions, bowings, processions, and changes in their positions were infinitely ridiculous and silly, and conveyed anything but that impression of awe, simplicity, and humility

with which fallen creatures ought to approach their great Creator, and in the spirit of which feeling I endeavoured to offer up my humble prayer at the throne of mercy."

When the dispute arose between the Church of Scotland and the Civil Courts in 1838, Mr. Forsyth took the side of the Church. This dispute, like all those in that Church since the Union, arose out of the dislike of the Scottish people to lay patronage. The first schism took place in 1712 on the re-establishment of lay patronage, in the separation of the "Reformed Kirk" the "Cameronians." There was another, called the "Secession," in 1733 under Ebenezer Erskine, and a third, called the "Relief," in 1752 under Thomas Gillespie. These two were amalgamated in 1847 under the style of the "United Presbyterian Church," while some time after the separation of the Free Church the "Reformed Kirk" joined that body.

There was, however, always a High Church party in the Kirk of Scotland. By this is meant those who took a high view of the authority of the Church in Church matters in its relations with the State. This party, depressed in the last century by the atmosphere of indifference in religious matters which characterised it and weakened by the secessions

already mentioned, revived in the present century. In 1834, having a majority in the General Assembly, they passed an act which gave congregations a veto on the presentation of pastors of whom they did not approve. Now, in Scotland, the induction of a presentee into a parish and, if it be his first charge, his ordination as a minister of the Gospel were performed by the same body, the Presbytery, at the same time. The one is a civil, the other an ecclesiastical act, and therefore it was not possible to distinguish an order to perform the one from being an order to perform the other, and very likely there was no great desire to do so on either side. When, therefore, the presentee, against whom the people had exercised the veto, in conjunction with his patron appealed to the Civil Court to enforce their civil right, the order of the Court to enforce it became virtually an order to ordain a minister who the Church held should not be ordained, and a conflict arose between the civil and ecclesiastical power. The Court insisted on its orders being obeyed. The Church refused obedience. An appeal to Parliament was unsuccessful, because, I believe on the authority of the late Sir Robert Peel, the question was not properly understood; and after a struggle

which lasted five years, the nation was astonished by the spectacle of nearly half the ministers of the Established Church of Scotland voluntarily throwing up their livings and leaving their manses to found the Free Church. It may help Englishmen to understand this question, to remind them that perhaps almost the only Englishman of note who did understand it at the time was the late Dr. Philpots, Bishop of Exeter, and that his sympathies were entirely with the Free Church.

While Mr. Forsyth fully sympathised with the High Church party and became a member of the Free Church, he never shared in the violence which for some years characterised the religious differences of Scotland. The landlords, as a rule, were either Episcopalians or adhered to the Established Church. They had generally no sympathy with the Free Church movement. Some of them refused sites on their properties on which to build the Free churches, and even treated as trespassers those who assembled on hill sides to worship the God they all professed to revere. A very bitter feeling was engendered by these acts, which lasted some years and caused lamentable divisions in society and even in families. In this Mr. Forsyth did not share. His infirmity of deaf-

ness no doubt protected him to a certain extent from being influenced by the passions with which he was surrounded, but his well-balanced mind rejected the imputation that, because one man here and there had used his legal power to persecute his countrymen, the whole communion to which he belonged should be therefore condemned. He, however, supported the Free Church steadily, subscribed to its funds as fully as his means admitted, and regularly attended its services, though from before its foundation he had never been able to hear one word that was said. He was an elder long before the Church question arose, and, though his infirmity latterly prevented his taking a part in the business of the session, he never ceased to take an interest in all its proceedings. He exerted himself greatly to bring about the erection of the Free High Church in Elgin, and when, to the regret of the people, Mr. Topp, their minister, left in obedience to a call from Canada, Mr. Forsyth joined the congregation by whom his friend Mr. Shepherd of Kingussie was called, and it was chiefly by his devoted exertions, in collecting funds from his influential and wealthy friends, that the South Free Church of Elgin was erected.

Mr. Forsyth, who died at the age of ninety,

lived to see the bitterness which arose out of the disruption of the Church greatly assuaged, though it still showed itself with considerable strength in his latter days. But since then it has been gradually growing milder, and, indeed, may now be said to be almost gone. It is, however, impossible to avoid remarking on the development of religious life that has gone forward in Scotland contemporary with this schism in the Church. The word "schism" has always been a disagreeable sound in the ears of the members of established churches, and especially in those of their clergy; but it is beyond all question that the times of division on church questions have been times of earnest awakening of real religious life, and those of unquestioning uniformity have been seasons of comparative religious apathy. Not to speak of the religious aspect of Europe before the Reformation, and the change that came over it then, since that time we have abundant proof of the fact. Hardly was the struggle of the Reformation over, and Protestantism in different forms established in England and Scotland, than the innovations of Andrews and Laud in England, and the attempts of James VI. to re-establish episcopacy in Scotland called forth the great Puritan effort of the seventeenth century, the success of which was

to be followed, first by the reaction of persecution in the times of the later Stuarts, and then by a century of religious deadness, uniformity, and apathy. It is true that, even during this time, religious life had its manifestations in the action of Wesley and Whitefield in England, and of Erskine and Gillespie in Scotland; but the general aspect of religion in both countries was a want of spirituality and earnestness, and a more than common subservience of the Church to the State. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the evangelical revival began, and, as already related, became dominant in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland about the time of the first Reform Act. At the same time a movement, in the direction of Laud's views, arose in the University of Oxford, the outcome of which is the ritualism of the present day in the Church of England. And there is more in common between these two movements than is always recognised, radically though they differ in some respects. Both are zealous to grapple with the infidelity and irreligion of the day. They are both strongly for Church independence of the State in the matter of the government of the former. A strong section, of what I may call the High Church Party in either Church, is in favour of disestablishment; and,

though in neither of the Churches do these sections carry the people of their own party with them just yet, the question is growing, and it only can grow in one direction. But the effect of this measure would be very different in the two countries. In Scotland, where, since the Act of 1874 abolishing patronage, there is no real difference between the several Presbyterian Churches, disestablishment would certainly remove the only obstacle to their union, and that would probably follow, whether to the advantage or detriment of religious vitality God alone knows. But in England it can hardly lead to anything but disruption. The High and the Low Churches would separate, for it is nothing but the State Establishment that keeps such thoroughly discordant elements together in seeming union. The Broad Church party would disappear, for its *raison-d'être* would be gone. But the signs of the times point towards disestablishment in both countries, and it can only be looked on as a question of time. Should Irish independence be abandoned as hopeless, it is by no means improbable that the disestablishment of the Churches is the question the Liberal party might take up. Disestablishment in England would certainly lead to religious activity, for the Churches formed by the break-up of the

State Church would be rivals, and make new alliances accentuating their present differences, and we may hope that the energy would not be lost in Scotland when its sister Church in England would be in the midst of the fray. This, though now becoming apparent, was not foreseen in Mr. Forsyth's day, and, even now, it is hardly evident to many both in England and Scotland, for in the former they do not believe disestablishment possible, and in the latter those who advocate it can hardly as yet be credited with a desire for church union as the motive for their settled purpose. But, whether for weal or for woe to the countries concerned, it can hardly be doubted that the great disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843, the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1870, the virtual practical abandonment of all State control over the remaining Established Church of Scotland in 1874, and the present determined attitude of the people in Wales, not only on the tithe question, but on the disestablishment of the Church in the Principality itself, will have their effect before long on the remaining church establishments in the United Kingdom.

But of one thing we may be sure that, whatever happens, it will not be to the detriment of the kingdom of God and His Christ. The

manifestation of this kingdom was conspicuously the result of the movement in which Mr. Forsyth took part. The religious development of Scotland has been astounding, and altogether in a healthy direction. The number of churches in the country has been more than doubled since the Disruption, not only by the erection of Free Churches in almost every parish, but by the stimulus given to the other Churches to provide for the growing numbers and the greater diligence in attendance upon divine worship to which the movement has given rise. The Free Church has built manses almost everywhere, established a Sustentation Fund for the support of its ministers, and colleges for the proper education and training of the clergy. It supports home and foreign missions, and takes a prominent part in all the endeavours of the day to grapple with the irreligion and vice which abound in the slums of our large towns. Nor has all this been without its effect on the Established Church. It has been stirred up to go and do likewise. At the Disruption the missionaries of the Church of Scotland almost entirely adhered to the Free Church, and this, while it constrained the Free Church to support them, stimulated the Establishment to open other new fields for missionary efforts of its own.

Could we have a more vivid instance of schism overruled to further the development of the kingdom of God, or better calculated to make men wonder whether minor divisions, which do not touch real unity in Christ, may not be a means to an end of which we have no conception? I feel very certain that, if he had been alive to see it, such would be the view taken by Mr. Forsyth on the present situation of ecclesiastical affairs in this country. He would most assuredly have rejoiced in the clear evidence of the advance of the kingdom of God throughout the length and breadth of the land.

CHAPTER XI.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC LIFE.

MR. FORSYTH'S MARRIAGE—HIS HAPPINESS IN DOMESTIC LIFE—HIS FAMILY—HIS GREAT INTEREST IN HIS GRANDCHILDREN—HIS COLLATERAL RELATIVES.

IN 1801, finding himself well to do, Mr. Forsyth married his cousin, Miss Catherine Forsyth, daughter of William Forsyth of Cromarty who has been already mentioned in the first chapter of this memoir. Alluding to his union with this lady he himself writes: "This connection contributed greatly to my personal happiness and self-respect, and to my general establishment and respectability in life and society; and the affectionate intercourse which subsisted between us, from that moment to the end of her existence, was a source of the highest intellectual and endearing enjoyment to me." Mrs. Forsyth was much beloved by her children, who had the greatest and most tender respect for her memory. She died in 1826. A letter which I have seen of hers, on the occasion of her eldest daughter's going to India in 1820,

shows that she was a woman of considerable powers of mind and great tenderness of feeling. By her Mr. Forsyth had five daughters. The eldest, Elizabeth, went out to India in 1820 to join her uncle John Forsyth of the Bengal Civil Service, who with his wife had invited her to live with them, he holding at the time a high appointment in Calcutta. Unfortunately she caught a fever there and died in less than a year after her arrival in the country. She left behind her an interesting journal of her voyage and early impressions of Calcutta and its neighbourhood, which is doubly interesting to me to whom the scenes are familiar. The journal proves her to have been an amiable and accomplished young woman, spending her time on the voyage in reading and conversing in French and Italian, and even beginning Hindustani after her arrival in India. The second daughter, Anne, married Mr. W. D. Macandrew of Lisbon and Liverpool, and had by him a large family of sons and daughters, who are now the only living representatives of Mr. Forsyth. She died in 1863. But four of her sons and two of her daughters have families, so there are plenty of Mr. Forsyth's descendants alive though they do not bear his family name. The third daughter, Justina, married Mr. Arthur Duff,

Sheriff Clerk of the County of Moray, and left no issue. She died in 1857, two years before Mr. Forsyth, to his great grief. His two younger daughters, Isabella and Catherine, survived him, and were well known and much respected in Elgin, where they died, the elder in 1870 and the younger in 1874, to the great grief of their nephews and neices, to whom they were united, not only by relationship, but by a long intimacy illustrated by the most tender affection. The domestic life and hearty hospitality of Mr. Forsyth was gladdened and adorned by these ladies, and the charm of their social circle was well known and is still remembered by some of the older inhabitants of Elgin where they lived the whole of their lives.

The confidence and affection which existed between Mr. Forsyth and his grandchildren was of the warmest and most intimate nature. He corresponded regularly with all of them, and took the greatest interest in their doings. One of them, Æneas, had gone out to South America to his brother William, who had prospered there as a merchant, and he died there in 1853 at the age of twenty. He was a most promising young man, and his early death was the greatest grief to his aged grandfather, who thus wrote to William on the occasion:—"Though late, I

would not be last in mingling my tears with yours over the grave of our hopes in dear Æneas. I have never but once in my life had such a shock as that I received on reading your letters of the 17th and 19th January here on the 10th of this month." His letter is dated 30th March 1853. "I could not realise the event at all; could not allow myself to think that so much spirit, vigour, and apparent strength was to be cut down so suddenly. That the lamp of life, which displayed so many amiable qualities, such fine accomplishments, interesting manners, and such solid talents for the important business of life, should have been thus so soon extinguished. But for wise and good ends, I have no doubt, the great Disposer of all things has permitted it. Dark, painful, and mysterious though it be, we shall yet be made to see its necessity and benevolence, for the Saviour Himself has declared that 'what we know not now we shall know hereafter.' Meantime submission and resignation to His holy will is certainly our duty, and therefore, I trust, my dear William, you are endeavouring to draw comfort from the performance of that duty, and the belief that he has been removed from the evil to come, and is now in the enjoyment of infinitely superior happiness to any-

thing that the most brilliant success this world can afford could give. I am fully aware of the lacerated hearts and the disappointed hopes this heavy bereavement has occasioned, and have been sympathising truly and deeply with your dear parents, sisters, and brothers, and yourself who have the brunt and burden of this sad sorrow to bear alone in a land of strangers. I trust they and you have felt that divine support and strengthening aid, from the religious principles instilled in your youth, which, by the blessing of God, can alone reconcile us to such an affliction, and enable us by the aid of His Holy Spirit to derive that spiritual improvement from it which doubtless He intends it should produce.

"Your letter to your mother, entering so minutely into the progress of his case from the beginning of it to the sad end, the detail of the medical attentions, and your own watching weariness and intense suffering, with the graphic account of the last solemnities and duties paid with so much propriety and respect by the whole community to his honoured remains, were convincing proofs of your affectionate regard to the living and the dead. And although, at the moment of writing and reading, it must have acted as coals of fire on the

hearts of yourself and your family, yet it will be regarded as a precious record of these most interesting events, and will be often recurred to."

In 1854 Mr. Forsyth's son-in-law, Mr. Macandrew, came to Elgin. He had been many years in business in Liverpool, but had a stroke of paralysis and had lost the use of his lower limbs, and, being unfit for business, had sold it and retired to Elgin to spend his last days among his own kith and kin, for both he and his wife were Elgin people. Mr. Forsyth was very busy in the arrangements made for their reception, and he thus describes it himself in a letter to one of his grandsons, dated 29th July 1854.

"They left Liverpool on Monday the 3rd inst. at 4 P.M., and slept at Carlisle that night, sleeping here the following! You know how indomitably resolute your father is in all matters of travelling. He laid down the law that they must be in Elgin then, and sure enough then and there they were! I expected to see them all broken to pieces by such enormous fatigue, but was agreeably surprised to see them so cheery and well over a hearty tea-supper and off to bed at two in the morning, and if possible still more surprised to find them at the breakfast-table merry and laughing at 9 o'clock!

Well, everything has gone on hearty and pleasant since then, and I hope will continue so to the end. We have been blessed with the finest weather possible, and have here, in my old friend Captain Falconer's villa, the finest air and the best and fullest accommodation we could desire, especially for your father's condition, which has been most kindly pressed on me by my old friend's widow, now in Germany with her niece and for two years to remain there. You father has almost the same kind of enjoyment (except the baths) that he had at Rehme. Sitting on a sofa in the open air, midst flowers, shrubs, and trees, and with all his friends about him, newspapers and reading of all kinds to his heart's content, and but a step into the sitting-parlour, which, with his bedroom, dressing-room, &c., are all on the ground floor and of the easiest access, he finds the greatest comfort in it, which is a great consolation to us all. For short excursions to his old haunts in the town we get the use of a very nice garden chair and a man to push it along, and for more extended rambles into the country we have his nephew James Johnston's phaeton, or a carriage from the hotel, or the iron railway to Lossiemouth. So I hope his health will be improved by so much exercise in the open native

air. But for his chief and peculiar ailment I fear there is no hope of recovery. His appetite is good, and he sleeps pretty well, while you would be astonished at his appearance, all above the belt. I think it equally good with any period since I have known him. Your mother equally surprises me. She has as much strength, activity, and spirits as your three aunts put together. We have been going over all the old stories and family incidents, and she has kept us laughing more than I have seen for many years. This visit, I hope, will be good for all in general health and improved spirits."

Mr. Forsyth kept up his spirits and his correspondence to the very last. On the 21st February 1859, when he was ninety years of age, he wrote to his grandson William as follows:—

"I have to acknowledge with much pleasure and many thanks receipt of your photograph through Mrs. Duncan. I am much gratified and obliged by this kind present, and will have it neatly framed and introduced to the 'family circle' that now occupies the whole of the end of my bedroom. I was at the Knoll" (our father's house) "yesterday, comparing my copy with the original sent to him, which, though superior, does not give me enough of your face to decide it as yours if I had not been prepared

for that, and even they, though not so doubtful as I am, are scarcely reconciled to its representation. With Rachel's I shall have a goodly number to occupy my thoughts and prayers for their welfare. When looking through my curtains I see all their faces smiling at me, and this without the great-grandchildren who will require an end to themselves by and by.

"I hope the move to Tacna (in Peru) will be for much good to you all, you in business and Rachel and her dear little ones in health. I see her mother is very anxious about a nurse to go out and take charge of them, a most desirable object, but one which I fear will be very difficult to accomplish; the prejudices of that class being so strong against the removal from home and friends, and especially the enormous distance. I well know that no stone will be left untried that will give the least hope of success. But of all that you will be fully informed from the Knoll, as also of our late matrimonial and local news.

"We have had a cold, foggy, damp, and unwholesome winter hitherto — much sickness and many deaths. But, praise be to God, we in this 'auld biggin' have been brought through hitherto, by His gracious providence, wonderfully. Although occasional colds and sore throats have been laid on each of us, at present

we are really pretty well. At the Knoll they have on the whole come very well on too. You would hear of Isaac's" (my own) "promotion, with which he seems well pleased. James and Mary" (my elder brother and his wife), "and Sir Kenneth" (their son), "and Bob" (another brother) "are all thriving and well; the latter off on a trip to recover from some remnant of fever hanging about him.

"I am now an old broken-down man, hardly able to walk a mile on end from mere weakness of limbs, but otherwise surprisingly well for my lengthened years. May God enable me to prepare for that event which cometh to all and cannot be far from me. That He may surround you and your dear Rachel and little ones with comfort and success is my earnest prayer."

There are not many men of ninety years of age who could write such a letter as that—a letter showing an active interest not only in his immediate surroundings, but in the arrangements of a family he had not seen, except the parents, and those only some years before, and an intimate acquaintance with the affairs of his other grandchildren in China and India. When Mr. Forsyth died he had several great grandchildren, but I believe he only actually saw one of them. This was the son of Mr. Macandrew's

eldest daughter, who married Dr. Duncan, health officer of Liverpool, a man who may be called the father of urban sanitation in England. The great-grandson is now a barrister of the High Court of Justice, and remembers his great-grandfather.

Mr. Forsyth's direct descendants are now Macandrews, Duncans, and Gavins, the last through Mr. Macandrew's second daughter, who married Mr. John Gavin of Strichen and Ceylon, and is now a widow with a large family of sons and daughters. He has no collateral relatives of the full blood, but his father's daughter by his first marriage, Elizabeth, married Thomas Stephen, Provost of Elgin, and the heirs male of this family are settled in Canada. Elizabeth Stephen, a daughter of this marriage, married James Miln of Milnfield, and their son was the late Thomas Miln of Milnfield and Batavia, who died in Elgin in 1870, aged 87. One son of Alexander Forsyth by his first marriage, John Forsyth who was a merchant in Elgin, survived his father. He married Sophia Grant, daughter of the minister of Nigg in Rosshire, and their daughter was Ann Forsyth, who married Mr. Adam Longmore of the Court of Exchequer in Edinburgh, and their son, John Alexander Longmore, died a bachelor without issue in 1875.

CHAPTER XII.

DEATH, FUNERAL, AND CHARACTER.

MR. FORSYTH'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE—HIS GOOD HEALTH AND MENTAL VIGOUR TO THE LAST—LAST APPEARANCE IN PUBLIC AT THE CENTENARY OF ROBERT BURNS WHEN NINETY YEARS OF AGE—HIS LAST ILLNESS—DEATH—FUNERAL—TRIBUTES OF OFFICIAL RESPECT FROM THE MUNICIPAL AND CHURCH AUTHORITIES—LOVING CHARACTER OF THE MEMORY IN WHICH HE IS HELD—SUMMARY OF HIS CHARACTER BY THE LATE ROBERT YOUNG.

MR. FORSYTH was in person tall and stalwart and was an active and athletic man. The accounts of his tours in his younger days showed that he possessed considerable bodily vigour. With the exception of his deafness he enjoyed remarkably good health, and up to the very last his mental power was in no way impaired, and he took some exercise every fine day up to his fatal illness. His last appearance in public was on the occasion of the centenary of Robert Burns, in January 1859, when he was ninety years of age. He was then in his ordinary health, and made a suitable reply to a toast in which a handsome compliment was paid to

himself. The last writing I have seen of his is a note to my cousin, Mr. Johnston of Newmill, written as clearly as ever: it is dated the 9th May 1859, asking him to dinner. It runs thus:—

"Mr. Stables of Cawdor Castle and Mr. Gordon Birny" (*sic*) "have agreed to dine with us to-morrow at five—and it will give us great pleasure if you will meet them there. This is no party, merely two or three friends. I am such an inferior animal nowadays that nothing else will do.—I am, &c. ISAAC FORSYTH."

On the 14th, Mr. Forsyth became ill. He was mercifully dealt with in his last days, receiving the unwearied attentions of his family, and he died peacefully at four o'clock on the morning of the 19th May 1859, aged ninety years and eight months. He enjoyed the consolations of religion in his last hours, placing all his dependence on the merits of his Redeemer. With this good hope he passed into eternity, and, as he lived the life of the righteous, his last end was peace, and his friends may indulge the hope that he is enjoying the glorious rest prepared for the people of God.

On the 20th May, at a meeting of the Town Council of Elgin, "it was unanimously agreed

that the Provost, Magistrates, and Councillors should walk in procession at Mr. Isaac Forsyth's funeral, which is to take place on the 25th current, and that the knells shall be rung from the bell on the occasion, and, on the suggestion of several citizens, it is recommended to the merchants and traders to shut their respective places of business during the time of the funeral procession."

The funeral took place on the 25th May, and was the most numerously attended of any then remembered in Elgin. The Provost and Magistrates of the Burgh, the clergy of all denominations, and the incorporated trades attended officially. A very large number of the inhabitants joined the procession as well as many personal friends from a distance, the shops were shut, and every mark of public respect was paid to his memory.

The Kirk Session of the South Free Church of Elgin paid the following testimony to their appreciation of Mr. Forsyth :—

"At Elgin, the 12th day of October 1859, the Kirk Session met and was constituted with prayer.

"*Inter alia*,

"The Kirk Session resolve, at this their first

meeting since the lamented death of Mr. Isaac Forsyth, to record their deep sense of the loss they have sustained in his removal, and their grateful remembrance of the warm interest he took at all times in the welfare of the congregation, and of everything that concerned the progress of Christ's kingdom, and of his readiness to aid his brethren by sound advice and wise counsel, though prevented by bodily infirmity from performing some of the ordinary duties of his office.

"The Session would also remember, as a thing that was fitted to read a lesson to all, his reverence and regard for the houses and ordinances of God as shown by his weekly presence in the sanctuary, though unable to hear the voice of praise, of prayer, or the preached word.

"The Session resolve also to record their deep sympathy with the bereaved family, and instruct the clerk to furnish an extract of this minute to the Misses Forsyth and also to Mr. and Mrs. Macandrew."

Mr. Forsyth's body was buried in the tomb of his father in the Cathedral God's Acre, which he loved so well. Here were buried his father with both his wives and his sons John, Joseph, and Isaac. The tomb is a small square enclosed by a wall into which are inserted slabs with the

mementos of the deceased. As to the graves themselves, there is some doubt about the exact spots in regard to those buried there before the Cathedral ground was enclosed and taken care of, but in the present century they may be relied upon. No one is now allowed to be buried within the Cathedral precincts unless belonging to those families which have had tombs appropriated to them in former days, there being a new cemetery at New Elgin for general use, the Cathedral God's Acre having been deemed by the authorities to be full enough. The inscription to his memory is as simple as even he could desire.

IN MEMORY OF

ISAAC FORSYTH,

BOOKSELLER IN ELGIN,

BORN *12th September* 1768. DIED *19th May* 1859.

In his own family the memory of Mr. Forsyth is a matter of reverence. He was to us all the dearest of parents and the most confidential of friends. In trouble or in success he was uniformly and strongly sympathetic, and his penetrating mind and sound principles reflected themselves in those brought under his influence. He had generally one or two of his grandchildren living with him, and we all had our turn and

loved him dearly and well, for his kindness and sympathy with youth were unbounded. Who could not love the hearty and genial old man who in his eighty-eighth year could write to his granddaughter, then a young mother with a chubby boy, in this strain? "Many thanks for your kind and prompt letter of yesterday's date received this afternoon. The knee-caps are a secondary consideration, as we can, when winter arrives, get them made of good old Scotch 'woo' at any time, though, with all my nationality, I prefer your softer Welsh. But, by way of a little luxury, I should be much obliged by *one* pair of these *fleecy caps* of the largest size, as, like everything else woollen, they must shrink greatly in washing. If they can overtake Miss Watson's departure well and good, if not, at some future time. But the three pair of hose are indispensable if she has stowage for them.

"I cannot tell you how much you have gladdened us all to-day by your announcement. I sat an hour with your father this morning. He was in fine looks and fine spirits, and enjoyed a rambling kind of crack exceedingly. I said to him how provoking it was that our dear Mary Watson could not have a glimpse of the beauties from these windows, even fading as they are, to

become a subject of communication with 'him that's far awa',' as well as an interchange of feelings and affections with those who will ever be dear to him." (Miss Watson was about to be married to his eldest grandson in China.) "Thank God your letter has dispelled that doubt, and we shall be counting the hours until she appears. As my lassies were putting on shawls to take a walk when the postman presented your letter, I desired them to go round by 'the Knoll,' and delight them with a perusal of it. They had none by this post, and, as you know well, were most happy that this long and lingering prospect is at last confirmed.

"The weather was most beautiful to-day: a brilliant sun, a peculiarly dry and pleasant breeze, the fading leaves in all their variety of shade, our little world all on foot enjoying the favour —for alas! I must confess to the instability of our climate—and our noble cathedral looking down in all its venerable glory on the passing scene. It is curious that a burst of the shrubbery opposite to the Knoll drew forth an exclamation from me as I left the house: 'How provoking that Mary cannot see all these before leaving home!' In half an hour how much you have changed the feeling! I could have given her a capital billet on my nephew's roomy

house in Edinburgh, if the fellow were not a confirmed bachelor and a fool for being so.

"We are all well here, thank God. *Our* Mary has got into the very stream of Elgin gaiety, two or three parties a week with music and dancing. I have not seen them begin so early for some years past.

"I am sorry to hear of your hero's mishap" (his great-grandson), "but I trust he will soon be himself again. I am greatly more concerned to hear of his father's ailments, having hoped that the bracing air of the Yorkshire hills would have blown them away. We must wait God's time, and that is best if we had but patience and trust in His mercy.

"Tell Joe since he became a Liverpool man of business I have heard nothing from him, and very little of him. Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and days o' langsyne."

Surely a man, who at such an age, and in spite of such an infirmity as that with which he was visited, showed a mind so active, so sympathetic, so appreciative, and so kindly towards others, may be said to have lived his life right out, long though it was; and if happiness be, as the kingdom of God is, within us, then was Mr. Forsyth a happy man in himself, as he was unquestionably the source of happiness to many

others. But he was a man of strong will, and when he took an idea into his head it was not easy to induce him to relinquish it. It was on his womenkind that this experience principally fell, and they were put at a great disadvantage, being deprived of that weapon which is their heritage, for they had to encounter that strong will and warm temperament no better furnished than with a china slate. But fortunately they had a well-balanced judgment and a thoroughly kind heart to deal with, and he was not always in the wrong even on those occasions.

His friends were hardly less warmly attached to him than his own family, and they embraced all classes of society. The Duke and Duchess of Gordon, last of the Huntly family bearing that title; James, fourth Earl of Fife; and the late Mr. Brodie, of Brodie, were his intimate friends, and there was hardly a gentleman of Moray in his day who did not know and appreciate him. There was not a respectable man in Elgin who would not have claimed him as a friend, and assuredly the most backward would not have been the poor. His personal friends and cronies are all gone. The only one left who, by any figure of speech, could be called his contemporary, is Dr. Gordon of Birnie, mentioned in the note quoted at the beginning of

this chapter, who is a geologist of well-known reputation, and now a very old man. Still there are a few of a younger generation left in Elgin who knew and loved him, and who will endorse all that I have said of him in this memoir. His dearest and most intimate friend was his cousin, Mr. John Jack. The two were inseparable, and sometimes reminded one of Dickens' Cheeryble Brothers. They had been intimate in 1791 as we have seen, and when Mr. Jack settled in Elgin in 1792, they lived in far more than cousinly friendship up to the time of Mr. Jack's death, which took place in 1858 to the great grief of his aged cousin and friend. Another friend who survived him but is now gone, the late Mr. Robert Young, who was for many years his legal adviser and is the author of the "Annals of Elgin and Spynie," thus sums up his character:—

"He was energetic and persevering, kind, benevolent, and warm-hearted, a lover of his country and his native place, and anxious for its improvement. A steady friend, abounding in hospitality to strangers, a gentleman and a Christian in every sense of the word."

APPENDIX.

A.—Memoir of Joseph Forysth, Author of "Remarks During a Tour in Italy," by his Brother, Isaac Forsyth.

Joseph Forsyth was born in Elgin, county of Moray, North Britain, on the 18th February 1763. His parents were respectable and virtuous. His father, Alexander Forsyth, carried on business as a merchant in that place for fifty years with the greatest credit to himself, which has been continued in succession by his eldest and youngest sons for nearly a century.

Joseph, while at the Grammar School of Elgin, was distinguished both by his assiduity and genius. At twelve years of age he was pronounced by his master to be qualified for the university. Being entered as a student at King's College, Aberdeen, he soon attracted the attention and kindness of Professor Ogilvy by the superior performance of his exercises and by the gentleness of his manners. As he successively passed under the care of other professors he found himself the object of their approbation and solicitude. Returning every summer to the bosom of his family, he devoted his whole time to study, and thus laid the foundation of that eminent knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics which it was then the business and chief pleasure of his life afterwards to complete. On concluding the four years usually employed in the Scotch University, his parents

left to himself the choice of a profession with a secret hope that he would prefer the Church; but his natural diffidence, and the little prospect he then saw of obtaining a patron determined him on trying to turn his classical acquirements to some account in that universal mart—London. Here he soon formed connection with the master of one of the most respectable academies about town, at Newington Butts, and, entering as assistant and successor, purchased the establishment, and conducted it for thirteen years on his own account with the highest reputation and success. The drudgery and irksomeness of this business were too much for his strength and spirits. Having a tendency to pulmonary complaints, he was, during this period, twice reduced by them to the brink of the grave. Seeing the impossibility of struggling longer with such incongruous duties as the care of his health and the conscientious superintendence of the education of nearly an hundred boarders, he resigned the charge, and retired to Devonshire in the spring of 1801 to recruit his constitution.

After restoring his health by a residence of some months in Devonshire, he came in July 1801 to Elgin to visit his aged and beloved mother, and remained until autumn. During his interval of "learned leisure" his mind was anxiously bent on enjoying the grand object of all the wishes and hopes of his life—a tour through Italy. His intimate acquaintance with the poets and historians of that classic country, both in its ancient and modern state, had already familiarised him with every scene and almost every building it contained. But at this period an insuperable barrier was interposed by Buonaparte—no Briton might tread with safety the soil over which he bore sway. Thus, in the midst of leisure, renovated health, and easy circumstances, was his ardent imagination left, almost in despair, to languish over his favourite object. It may be easily conceived with what rapture he hailed the unexpected happiness the peace of Amiens brought to every heart.

That event took place on the 1st October, was known in Elgin on the 7th, and Mr. Forsyth was already on his journey to London for Italy on the 12th. He was in France at the celebration of the extravagant and tumultuous festival that took place in honour of that hollow treaty. After spending a few weeks in Paris, where he had been twice before, he pushed into the land of promise, and arrived at Nice on Christmas Day 1801. Here his "Remarks" will best enable those who may feel an interest in his progress through life to trace it for the two succeeding years.

In consequence of the rupture between England and France in 1802, and the cruel and unjust order of Buonaparte to arrest all British subjects travelling in his dominions, Mr. Forsyth was seized by the police at Turin on the 25th May 1803 while on his return home through Switzerland and with no intention whatever of entering France. He was carried to Nismes, and found his situation there as pleasant as under restraint it could be. There were soon collected from Italy and the southern provinces of France a great many English at this depôt; and, in this early stage of their confinement, a considerable degree of relaxation and indulgence was granted. Feeling themselves unjustly detained, many of the more adventurous made their escape in different directions; and Mr. Forsyth, encouraged by the general practice, withdrew to Marseilles with the intention of passing in an American ship to Malta and thence to England. Here, however, the broker who negotiated for his passage sold him to the police, by whom he was arrested when stepping on board and conveyed under guard back to Nismes. For this venial transgression he was visited with a dreadful punishment. In the depth of a most severe winter he was marched from one extremity of France to the other (a distance of 600 miles), to that most execrable dungeon Fort de Bitche. His confinement at first was intolerably strict, but by degrees was softened

into something more bearable. His mild and gentle demeanour, the extent and variety of his information, and his facility in the French language at length procured him the notice and esteem of the Commandant, who afterwards paid him particular attention. He continued there two years; but in consequence of earnest applications to the French Government, by some of his friends who had been removed from Bitche to Verdun, he was at last permitted to join them, where he remained five years. The dissipation and riot in which the English prisoners in general indulged were so repugnant to his habits and feelings that he lived almost in solitude. He was well known by the more regular part of his countrymen there, who esteemed him for that fund of intelligence he possessed, and for his benevolence to hundreds of our poor prisoners whose allowances scarcely afforded the means of existence. At this time his most anxious desire, next to the recovery of freedom, was to be permitted to reside in Paris. The easy access to the society of learned Frenchmen, the public institutions, the museums, the National Library, and, above all, the glorious collection in the Louvre were his excitements. After many fruitless endeavours he at last accomplished his wish in 1811, through the influence of a lady in the suite of the King of Holland then a kind of State prisoner at Paris. His permission was no sooner granted than he set off for the capital, and found himself established in every respect, except his darling object liberty, to his heart's content. Four months had however scarcely elapsed, when an order from Government was secretly issued to send off instantly every Englishman from Paris to his respective depôt.

Mr. Forsyth's astonishment and disappointment were extreme when two gensdarmes drew aside his curtain at four o'clock on the morning of the 22nd July, presented the order, and desired him to dress immediately and follow them. He waited on two friends, members of the National

Institute, who accompanied him to the Minister of Police, who, by way of special indulgence, gave him two days to prepare for his departure with the choice of Verdun or Valenciennes as his future residence. He fixed on the latter, and after three years' abode was well pleased with the preference he had given it. Here he enjoyed the advantage of riding into the country, and even of living, during the summer months, in a cottage several miles from the town. These favours seem to have been conceded from the estimation in which he was held by the Commandant, by whom he was appointed one of the five commissioners who superintended the appropriation of the allowances given to the mass of prisoners by the French Government and the Patriotic Fund at Lloyd's.

Mr. Forsyth's favourite pursuits during his detention seem to have been the classics, Italian poetry, and architecture; but the anxiety which he incessantly felt to be delivered from restraint absorbed every other consideration, and prevented the application of his mind to any fixed subject, or to composition of any kind. His correspondence at this time shows unwearied applications to his friends in Paris, to the Government, and even personally to the Emperor, but without any effect. Nor were his friends in Britain less anxious or less zealous in the same good cause; yet, though persons of high rank and influence lent their earnest assistance, no beneficial effect resulted from it. Having seen some of the *détenus* obtain their release in consequence of appearing before the public in the character of authors—Buonaparte affecting to be considered the patron and protector of literature—Mr. Forsyth was induced to prepare the notes he had made while on his tour in Italy and publish them in England, copies of which were forwarded to the National Institute at Paris with solicitations in his favour by some of the most eminent literary characters in London. Even this last effort for freedom failed, and he never to his dying day ceased to regret that

it had been made. He considered his "Remarks" as not worthy of himself, put together, as they were, on the spur of the moment to attain a particular object dearer to him than fame itself.

Had he embodied his whole mind with his ample store of materials, in a period of personal self-satisfaction and self-possession, his work would have displayed his erudition and talents in a far more favourable light.

At length the long-wished-for moment of deliverance approached. The appearance of the Allies on the north-eastern frontier of France, in the end of 1813, made it necessary that the English depôts should be removed further into the interior. They were ordered first to Mons, then to Orleans, and lastly to Blois. At Orleans, on the 6th April 1814, Mr. Forsyth first heard the welcome news of the Allies having entered Paris on the 31st March. His chains were now broken, freedom and home burst upon him with all their endearing force, and for two days he seems to have been almost wild with joy. The first moments of recollection were devoted to his journey to Paris. There he had the satisfaction of finding himself in the midst of the deliverers of Europe, and surrounded by the most extraordinary assemblage of princes, statesmen, and soldiers that had ever met on one spot. In May he arrived in England, and, after an absence of thirteen years, came to Elgin in July, to visit his only surviving brother and the friends of his earliest days.

Fearing to encounter the severity of a northern winter he returned to London in October, and spent the season in the family of a friend in Queen Square Bloomsbury, where every attention that kindness or affection could dictate was paid to his comfort. His time was employed chiefly in the reading-room of the British Museum and in intercourse with men of letters. In April 1815 he came down again to Elgin to establish himself with his brother and take possession of his extensive collection of books from which he

had been divorced for the last fourteen years. After so long a privation he seemed almost to devour them by the eagerness of his enjoyment and his incessant devotion to them. It was, however, evident that his constitution, originally delicate, had been undermined by the harassing confinement which he had undergone, and that the irritation of so painful a cause of distress to a mind of the greatest susceptibility had fatally injured the body. His relations observed, particularly in the summer of 1815, a weakness of nerve and a lassitude of mind that gave them the greatest alarm. With a view of rousing his spirits and improving his health by moderate exercise and varied scenery, his brother accompanied him in an excursion through the Highlands of Inverness and Argyle to the island of Staffa. The grandeur and sublimity of the objects which present themselves in that tour, and the wonders of Staffa delighted and interested him exceedingly, and he returned home apparently invigorated in body and cheered in mind.

How uncertain is the tenure of any temporal good! This amiable man and most accomplished scholar, who was now thought to have laid the foundation of better health, was on the very eve of removal to another and a better world! On Friday night, the 17th September 1815, a few days after his return, having spent the evening with more than usual gaiety, he was struck speechless and nearly insensible by a fit of apoplexy, in which he lingered till Monday the 20th, and then died, to the irreparable loss of his relations and the sincere regret of all who had the opportunity of admiring his highly cultivated talents and the amiable and polished expression of the heart which shone so conspicuously in him.

B.—Outline of the Antiquities and History of Elgin.

Chapter I.

A short but authentic account of the state of the Province of Moray previous to the erection of the Cathedral at Elgin.

A chapter, or section, on the state of the North of Scotland during the twelfth century, and just before the erection of Elgin Cathedral, Priory of Pluscarden, Abbey of Kinloss, and the various monasteries and other religious establishments in the Province of Moray.

Chapter II.

The number, extent, and grandeur of the religious establishments in and around Elgin.

1. The Cathedral, its history, description, and dimensions.

2. Palace of Spynie, the lands belonging to it, and the Bishop's revenue as it would produce in the present day.

3. Bishop's town-house and garden.

4. The Dean's house (Mr. Robertson's), Deanshaugh, Bishopmill, and Linksfield.

5. The Chancellor's (Mr. Duff's), and garden, with glebe in the pans.

6. The Archdeacon's (not known) house.

7. The Chanter's house (minister of Alves) not known.

These five dignitaries' houses, and the other canons' houses (17), with gardens, were all within the precincts, and their glebes in the pans.

The religious establishments in and around Elgin connected with the Cathedral, viz.:—

1. The Greyfriars' Monastery, their church and grounds.

2. The Blackfriars: not so well known as the above.

3. The Whitefriars, doubtful.

4. Maisondieu, from Mr.

Robert Grigor's notes, and the Wolf of Badenoch.

5. Bedesmen's houses. Mr. G.'s notes.

6. The cross in the Cathedral churchyard, its uses and history given by Mr. G.

The boundary-wall of the precinct and its four gates. Mr. G.'s notes.

The Ordeal Pot adjoining, its uses and history. Mr. G.'s notes.

Priory of Pluscarden, its history, description, and dimensions, with an account of its revenues as they would be at the present day.

Abbey of Kinloss. Do. do.

CHAPTER III.

Houses of the nobility and gentry of the North in Elgin and near the Cathedral.

1. Marquis of Huntly's house, head of the College Wynd.

2. Earl of Moray's house, afterwards Lord Duffus's, now rebuilt, and close to Batchen Street.

3. Drummuir's house, now the Trades Hall.

4. Newmill's house—find the family name.

5. Lady High house. Do.

6. James Elder's house (had a bartisan and double roof), perhaps Jas. Henry could say something of it.

7. Calder's house, rebuilt into Mr. Taylor's house and another, Mr. Robertson's.

8. Lord Braco's house, now Mr. D. Grant and Eppie Phipps's property.

9. The Commissary of Moray's house, David Stuart of Newton, probably a cadet of the Moray family and Commissioner or Factor over the Earl of Moray's

estates. His initials and his wife's, with the Stuart arms and the date, 1688, are on the front of the wall of the house known now as Dunkinty's-Innes.

10. The Earl of Dunfermline's house, granted to him at the Reformation but previously the Bishop of Moray's town-house.

The Knights of Malta's iron crosses on the highest points of the loftiest houses in Elgin, supposed to be their mark of feudal superiority from which they derived a feu-duty.

CHAPTER IV.

The ancient public buildings of Elgin.

1. The castle and chapel of Lady Hill and outward wall. Mr. G.'s notes.

2. The old jail and town-house. Do.

3. The Church of St. Giles. Do.

4. The Little Kirk. Do.

5. The Muckle Cross. Do.

6. The Little Cross. Do.

(Here comes the paragraph comparing the High Street of Elgin to that of Edinburgh, quoted Chap. VII.)

CHAPTER V.

The history of the ancient trade in malt making, in which thirty or thirty-two kilns of about 100 feet in length each were employed.

Where exported and what were the returns? How from this arose a very extensive trade in smuggling liquors, tea, tobacco, and, in short, in every description of goods.

This may be made an interesting and rather important chapter by collecting such information as the books give, and as yet may be gathered from our oldest men—Mr. Culbard, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Grigor, and others. But these having all failed, and no manufacturers succeeding, the town of Elgin seems to have fallen much into the shade as compared with places of very inferior note previously, which, by means of commerce and manufactures, from about the

middle to the end of the last century, started into activity and importance. But the spirit of agricultural improvement beginning to be aroused by the Morayshire Farmer's Club, it has since led to most extensive and important results, and the trade and the town of Elgin may at present be said to depend on the progress and prosperity of agriculture.

CHAPTER VI.

History and state of the modern institutions of Elgin, educational and benevolent, legal and social.

1. The Academy, a full account of its present and prospective state.

2. The trade's school, the infant's school, the ladies' boarding school, and several private schools (merely allude to them).

3. The Elgin Institution, an account of, as adapted to the education and maintenance of twenty boys and twenty girls, to the maintenance of ten old men and ten old women, as well as a free school of 130 scholars.

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5. Lunatic Asylum, its history and importance.

6. The new Parochial Church, history of its erection, cost, and accommodation, with a copy of the inscription in the vestibule —*this may stir up to good.*

7. The new Assembly Rooms, their elegance, handsome proportions, and great convenience to society, cost of them, and debt.

8. The new public buildings for courts of law and county and town business, with the pro-

posed lock-up houses connected with them.

9. The Museum of the Elgin and Morayshire Literary and Scientific Association.

CHAPTER VII.

On the climate of Moray—as described by the Bishop of Ross, the Rev. Mr. Shaw, and Dr. Cruikshank of Elgin — of the abundance, quality, and cheapness of provisions, the moderate rent of houses, and the excellence and moderation of society.

The climate will afford and justify a long article from these first-rate authorities, as well as provisions, houses, education, and society.

CHAPTER VIII.

A comparative view of the manners and state of society in Elgin in 1800 and 1840.

Much might be said on the difference in dress and in personal cleanliness, in domestic and household comforts, in the mode and expense of visiting, conveyances, public meetings, &c., among all the various grades of inhabitants at these separate periods.

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